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## FIFTY-TWO

# SERMONS,

ON THE

## BAPTISMAL COVENANT. THE CREED. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

AND OTHER

IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

PRACTICAL RELIGION:

BEING ONE FOR EACH SUNDAY IN THE YEAR.

## SAMUEL WALKER, A. B.

Late of Exeter College, Oxford... Curate of Truro in Cornwall, &c. &c.

Christ is the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth. Grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

To which is prefixed,

## A PREFACE.

containing a full and authentic account of

THE AUTHOR'S LIFE AND MINISTRY.

A NEW EDITION.

ABERDEEN: Printed by D. Chalmers & Co. FOR JAMES MOIR, BOOKSELLER, HUNTLY. 1810.

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## TO THE PUBLIC.

THE worthy character of the late Reverend Mr. SAMUEL WALKER, of Truro, is well known. The practical Discourses with which he favoured the Public in his lifetime, have been much read and admired, and most of them frequently re-printed. Before his death, he intended to publish his Discourses on the Church of England Catechism: Those of them on the Creed chiefly excel in illustrating the tendency of the Doctrines of our Holy Faith, to promote holiness and virtue; - and in those on the Commands, the great Duties of the Christian Life are explained with such force of argument, that their merit has been candidly acknowledged by the English Reviewers, and other Gentlemen of taste, who espouse religious sentiments very opposite to Mr. Walker's.\* The sale of the former edition was so rapid, that, for many years past, it has been with the utmost difficulty that a copy could be procured at any price: The re-publishing of them is now undertaken at the earnest desire of several persons of distinction; and, it is hoped will find a favourable reception among the pious and judicious of different denominations.

<sup>\*</sup> Vide Monthly Review, Vol. XXIX. for 1763, Page 362, &c.

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## PREFACE,

Containing an Account of

## THE AUTHOR'S LIFE AND MINISTRY.

N reading the Works of a man who had been eminent in his profession, if it be done out of a desire of improvement, we are folicitous to inquire how he spent his private hours, and by what means he attained to his superior degree of excellence. An infight into the Life and Character of an Author, not only kindles in the ingenuous mind a laudable defire of imitation, but also prepares it for the better reception of what he has to advance; and therefore may be confidered in some fort as a recommendation of the Work itself. This observation will perhaps hold good with regard to the compositions of the learned in other professions; but must certainly be allowed to have the greatest weight when applied to the writings of those who have shewn the spirituality of God's Law, and have anplied it closely to the conscience, in order to produce that conviction of fin which alone can lead us to Christ. The ftrictness of this divine Law the heart of man naturally rifes againft. and defires to shake it off as a yoke too heavy to be born.

There never indeed appeared but one Person upon earth who might justly give the challenge, Which of you convinceth me of sin? and who could appeal to the great Searcher of hearts, As I came into the world to do thy will, so have I kept thy sayings.—All others, Christ only excepted, have need to smite their breasts, and to cry out with the Publican, God, be merciful to

me a sinner.

But though, through the degeneracy and impotence of our fallen nature, we are rendered incapable of performing a perfect and unfinning obedience to the divine will; yet, when we are convinced that men of like passions with ourselves have been made more than conquerors over their inbred corruptions, have bought forth their fruit unto holiness, in a life uniformly dedicated to the glory of God and the good of their Brethren, and have at last finished the course of this their mortal life with a hope full of immortality; we can no longer have any doubt concerning the reality and efficacy of a saving change wrought in their temper and conduct, how difficult soever it may appear to sless and blood. And it remains only that we walk in the same steps which they trod, that we may be made partakers of the same precious promises.

The force of Example is known to be much more powerful than that of Precept. Those who are Christians, not in name and outward profession only, but in spirit and in truth, are set forth as so many lights in a dark and before men that they may are commanded to let their light so shine before men that they may fee their good works, and glorify their Father which is in heaven.—They are the salt of the earth; and they are directed so to season their speech, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. Such is the Life of a real Christian upon earth: and his Writings after his decease may be regarded as the sayings of him, who

being dead yet speaketh.

I would not wish to preposses the mind of the Reader with any undue bias in favour of the Author of the following Discourses. Let the matter contained in them be carefully examined by the test of the written word. Let the Facts now to be recorded in a short sketch of his Life, shew that what he taught in public he lived in private, and let them testify that his ministerial labours were not confined to the pulpit, but that he diligently used every other method which seemed likely to promote the salvation of his slock. All that I would request of the Reader is, that in comparing the Author's sentiments with the sacred Oracles, he would beg of the Father of spirits to give him a single eye and an humble heart, and to enable him clearly to discern and affectionately to embrace the truth as it is in Jesus.

Humility and fincerity of mind is the only foil wherein the feed of the word will grow up unto eternal life; and the

Bible

Bible is the only book from which we can learn to separate the wheat from the chaff.

Those of the Clergy into whose hands these sheets may fall will excuse my importunity, if I bespeak their more careful attention in reviewing the Life and Writings of Mr Walker: though neither eminence of station in the world, nor rare and uncommon attainments in human literature, will excite their admiration; for he lived and died a Curate; and though he was no way deficient in any branch of learning pertaining to his profession, yet he was engaged in too active and busy a scene of life to have leifure to acquire that extent and depth of erudition, which many men of lefs employment without fuperior abilities have attained to. But they will find in him excellencies of another kind, not lefs worthy of their regard; they will here contemplate the Life and Doctrines of one poffessed in an eminent degree of the knowledge, spirit, and zeal of a primitive Christian Teacher; of one who, though poor in this world, was rich in faith and good works; of one, who had learned to efteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the trea-

fures of Egypt.

I humbly call upon you, Reverend Brethren, who have taken upon you the solemn and important office of the Ministry, to observe with what diligence and earnest concern for the falvation of the fouls of men he laboured faithfully to fulfil the duties of his function. I befeech you to consider with calm and unprejudiced minds, as a matter of the utmost importance to yourselves, whether his sentiments were not exactly agreeable to the revealed word of God; and his conduct in all things conformed to the examples of faith and patience therein recorded for our instruction and imitation. If upon a cool and difpassionate examination, you see reason to conclude that they were, let me earnestly intreat you to be followers of him as he also was of Christ. If such a conduct should expose you, as it did him, to reproaches and fufferings, contempt and ridicule. not only from the more openly careless and profligate, but even from some, who though they maintain a decent form of godliness, are nevertheless unhappy strangers to the life and power thereof; you will with him remember, that he who spake as never man spake, was despised and rejected of men; and take consolation from these encouraging words of your blessed Master, who declared to his disciples that they would have great cause to rejoice, and be exceeding glad, when men should revile them and

persecute them, and say all manner of evil of them fallely, for his and his gospel's sake. If, with him, you endure hardness like good soldiers of Jesus Christ, not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing; if you are nothing moved by whatever trials may affault you, from the steady and uninterrupted pursuit of your own falvation, and that of those who hear you, you will also doubtless with him be made abundant partakers of the rich consolations that are in Christ, to sweeten your pasfage through this vale of fin and forrow: you will triumph as he did in the immediate prospect of approaching dissolution, and at last enter into the possession of that glorious inheritance, wherein he is now praising the Lord for his grace and mercy, and exulting in the fruition of eternal blifs.

I will now enter upon the talk affigned to me of drawing up from authentic Memorials a succinct account of the Life and Ministry of the Author of the following Discourses.

Our Author, Samuel Walker, was the youngest of seven children; he was born at Exeter, on the 16th day of December, in the year of our Lord 1714. His Parents were Robert Walker of the City of Exeter, Esq; and Margaret his Wife, who was the only Daughter of the Reverend Mr Richard Hall, Minister of St Edmund's and All-hallows in that City.

Robert Walker, the Father of Mr Samuel Walker, was the only Son of Sir Thomas Walker, Knight, who, as his Ancestors had done, represented the City of Exeter in many successive Parliaments during the reigns of King Charles I. and King Charles II. Sir Thomas's Lady was Mary the only Daughter of the Reverend Samuel Hall, A. M. youngest Son of Dr Joseph Hall, Bishop of Exeter.

Thus was our Author lineally descended from that pious, learned, evangelical, and truly Christian Prelate, to whom he feemed to have been allied not only by proximity of blood, but likewise by affinity and similarity of sentiment; as well as by a yet nobler relationship in grace, by being united, as a living Member of the same mystical Body, to the same glorious and exalted Head Christ Jesus.

Mr Samuel Walker, having lived under the care of his Parents till he was Eight years of age, was then put to the Grammar-school in Exeter, where he continued till he was Eighteen; when he was fent to Exeter-College, in the University of Oxford, and put under the care of the present Rector of that Society, Doctor Francis Webber.

Having

Having taken the degree of Bachelor of Arts in the year 1737, he was ordained the latter end of that year, and appointed to the Curacy of Dodescomb-Leigh, in the neighbourhood of Exeter, where he continued till August, 1738. He was prevailed upon by the late Lord Rolle, to undertake the charge of his youngest Brother's education, and to make the Tour of France with him; where Mr Walker acquired many of those polite accomplishments which adorn the Gentleman.

About two years after he returned to England, and accepted of the Curacy of Lanlivery in the County of Cornwall, under the Reverend Nicholas Kendall, A. M. one of the Canons of Exeter, and Archdeacon of Totness. On the death of Mr Kendall, March 3, 1740, he was presented by Walter Kendall, Efq; to the faid Vicarage, to hold the fame during the Minority of a Nephew of Mr Kendall, to whom, upon his coming of age, Mr Walker refigned it, and at Midsummer, 1746, en-

tered upon the Curacy of Truro in Cornwall.

Mr Walker, during the fix years he ferved Lanlivery, was always much esteemed for the decency and regularity of his conduct; having been by a gracious Providence preserved from all gross vices. His con cience, even at that time, dictated to him the necessity of constant diligence in the public duties of Preaching and Catechifing; though he was then unacquainted with those evangelical principles which he afterwards embraced, and taught with fo much fuccess in the latter years of his miniftry. Nor did he, destitute as he was of the light and motives which influenced his after conduct, neglect at any feafon to visit his parishioners, and give them the best counsel and advice he was able. A remarkable instance of his concern for them stands upon record in one of his papers. In the year 1744, being seized with a violent fever, he fent to a neighbouring Gentleman, and dictated to him a letter, which in case of his death, he defired might be transcribed and given to such of his Parishioners, as he found neither his preaching nor his private admonitions had wrought any good effect upon, whose names he then defired the Gentleman to take down; which is an evidence of his concern for the fouls of those under his care.

But before we proceed farther, it may not be amiss to say fomething concerning Mr Walker's endowments both in Body As to his person, he was tall in stature, his features were strong and comely, and his deportment such as commanded respect. An air of authority, which was natural to him, usually struck an impression of awe, at the first interview, upon those that conversed with him: but yet he conducted himself in such a manner, that whilst with a becoming dignity he extorted even from the froward and petulant a respect due to the Ministerial character, by his affability and readiness either in communicating his own thoughts, or attending to what was said by others, he rendered himself an agreeable companion to those who were willing either to impart or to receive instruction.

In his conversation he discovered an uncommon depth of thought, and delivered his fentiments with readiness of expression on any subject. His understanding was remarkably clear, and continued fo to the very last. He was possessed of a quick apprehension, a solid judgement, and a retentive memory. The faculty which appeared in a more distinguishing manner was his methodical exactness and propriety in the arrangement of his thoughts, and the distribution of the subject he undertook to elucidate. This is to be difcerned throughout his writings. And when his friends have observed to him that he usually discovered great accuracy and propriety in dividing the matter of his Discourses, he was wont at such times to say, that Logic had been a favourite ftudy with him from his youth. And indeed he generally took an opportunity of recommending an improvement in the art of Logic to younger Divines, who consulted him upon the prosecution of their studies. He cautioned them to beware of quoting fcraps of Scripture, as they frand by themselves, and building opinions thereon which the context would not authorife. In opposition to this slothful cuftom, he advifed them to confider each paffage with reference to what went before and what followed after; and likewise to mark with attention what analogy it bore to the general plan of Salvation by Grace. This circumstance might perhaps with more propriety have been referved to be mentioned hereafter; but as I was speaking of his intellectual endowments, it naturally occurred to me in this place:

But to return: Our Author, as it was mentioned, quitted Lanlivery, and fettled at Truro in the year 1746; at which time he was universally esteemed not only in his private character, but likewise for the regular discharge of the duties of

his Pastoral Function.

Some

Some of my Readers may perhaps ask, 'If Mr Walker' bore so respectable a character at his first coming to Truro; 'what occasion had he either to make any alteration in his 'principles, or to new-model his conduct?' I will therefore endeavour to give an answer to this question, which concerns a most important criss in his life, in as clear and satisfactory a manner as I am able.

It is hardly to be supposed that a man of his strong sense and folidity of judgement should be induced to differ so entirely from his former felf, if he had not feen sufficient ground to believe that he had been totally mistaken. There never was a man less likely to be deceived by any enthusiastic impressions, of which he was always fo jealous, that it was his constant rule to watch over the reasonings of his own mind, to compare all its conclusions with the plain sense of Scripture, and to lay no stress on any thing that was not warranted by an agreement with that unerring Rule. Thus was he guarded against the delusive fallies of a lively imagination; neither was he more likely to be missed by a deference to the authority of others, whatever his opinion or esteem of them might be; but what he faw for himself required in the word of God, as matter of faith or practice, that and that only he thought himfelf bound to believe and do. And he was so much afraid of leading others into that blind submission to his judgement, which he would not pay himself to any human authority, that he made it always a part of his advice to those whom he instructed, not to give their affent to any thing he should tell them, because he said it; but to go to their Bible, and to fearch the Scriptures, that their faith might not be built upon man's authority, but only upon divine testimony. It was not therefore without reason that he submitted to a change, which arose from the most deliberate and well-grounded conviction.

Did Religion require nothing more than external decency of manners, it must certainly be allowed that he was under no necessity of Reformation. But to make the necessity of such a change a little more intelligible to those of my Readers who may have hitherto neglected to consult the interests, and attend to the concerns of their own immortal souls, I must take leave to remind them, that there is an essential and very important difference between the external Professor of Christianity and the real internal Christian: That to depend upon regularity

in observing the outward modes of worship, upon acts of benevolence and kindness, upon abstaining from gross injustice and scandalous vices; that, in short, to appear outwardly blameless unto men, to make a fair shew in the flesh, and thereby to stifle and appeale the admonitions and accusations of Conscience, which was just our Author's former case, is the utmost height of the Religion of those, who take up with the form of godliness void of the power thereof: but that the real Christian, without being less careful to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called, and to adorn his profession by the practice of every thing that is amiable and praife-worthy, is farther taught to look carefully to the state of his heart and affections, and to examine the principles which actuate his conduct. He is filled with an habitual and earnest desire to be conformed; in the inward temper and disposition of his soul, to the image of him who bare our fins in his own body on the tree, that all who believe in him might not perish, but have eternal life. He strives to mortify all the corrupt inclinations, both of the flesh and of the mind; to renounce his own will in every instance where it rises in any degree of opposition to that of God; to be valiant in the cause of God and his truth; and resolute in bearing, with meekness and patience, the troubles he will unavoidably meet with for conscience sake: such, and so different from his former self, was our Author after this important change had taken place in

If the Reader is sensible of the difference, which I have faintly endeavoured to represent, between the real and nominal Christian, he will see the necessity of such a change; and his question will be answered to his satisfaction.

I beg leave, however, to add a few words more, now I am

upon this subject.

As Christians we are commanded to regulate all our actions with a single eye to the glory of God, and to the good of mankind. But neither the one nor the other of those motives appear to have any sway over our hearts, as long as our religion is confined merely to the observance of external performances. On the contrary, a selfiss, earthly and sensual disposition, cloaked under a mask of godliness, seems to direct the whole bent of our inclinations, while we serve God, not out of a principle of love, but of slavish fear; and while our affection to our Neighbour knows not more extensive bounds than that of Publicans

Publicans and finners, in loving those only that love us, Pride itfelf will often put us upon doing many duties which will make us appear outwardly righteous to men; and fear of shame, of injuring our worldly interest, or other temporary confiderations, will restrain us from the actual commission of many fins to which our hearts are strongly inclined. It is one thing to perform an outward work of righteousness; it is another to perform that work out of a pure difinterested view to the glory of God. The natural man, who proposeth no other end but felf-gratification in some shape or other, will counterfeit many acts of piety; but it is the privilege of the new-born Christian alone to aim singly at the glory of God, from a motive of real love to him, arising out of a sense of his having first loved us. Where the fruits of holiness are regularly and constantly brought forth, there we are obliged in charity to suppose that the tree is good, and that they spring from a living principle in the heart. But where this uniformity of conduct is wanting, and Religion dares to shew itself no farther than is confistent with the favour of the world, and cautiously declines the taking up of the cross; there, notwithstanding many things may be difcerned which are lovely and of good report, yet, when the state of such a man's heart is searched to the bottom, it is very probable that which is highly esteemed among men, will be found to be an abomination in the fight of God.

The woe denounced by our Saviour against the Scribes and Pharisees is equally applicable to the formal Professors of this and every age.—Ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead mens bones and of all uncleanness. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcisson, but a new creature. And unless the Image of God, which we lost by the fall of our first Parents, be restored by an entire renovation wrought in the spirit of our minds, whatever our outward carriage may be, we still remain natural men, dead in trespasses and sins. This

our Author found to be the case with himself.

It was not owing, as we have shewn, to any sudden slight of his own imagination, nor to his being led away by the influence of others, that he altered his manner of thinking, preaching, and living, but to a deep and solid conviction, sounded upon express testimony of Scripture, that he had hithert acted altogether upon wrong principles, by which he saw the

necessity of putting off the old man, and putting on the new. His best deeds, he found, were full of sin in themselves, and the result of bad or mistaken motives. His heart being laid open to him by the word of God, he discovered in himself an absence of every thing spiritually good, and a propensity to what is evil. It became plain to him, that a corrupted nature, lying at the bottom of those very actions which had gained him the applause of men, had desiled and rendered them blame-worthy

in the fight of God.

The occasion of his being brought to this knowledge of himfelf was as follows. About a year after he came to Truro, being in company with some friends, the subject of whose conversation turned upon the nature of justifying and saving Faith, he, as he freely owned afterwards, became fensible that he was totally unacquainted with that Faith which had been the topic of the discourse, and also convinced that he was destitute of fomething, which was of the greatest importance to his own as well as to the Salvation of the people committed to his charge. He faid nothing at that time of the concern he was brought under to any one of the company, but was ever afterwards, as opportunity offered, ready to enter upon the fubject. He began to discover that he had hitherto been ignorant of the nature of Gospel-salvation, inattentive to the spiritual state of his own soul and the souls of others, and governed in all his conduct, not by the only Christian motives of Love to God and man, but purely by fuch as were wholly fenfual and felfish; he found that he was a slave to the defire of man's esteem; and in short, as he himself explained it, that all had been gurong both within and without.

Upon this discovery, he applied himself with diligence and fervent prayer to the study of the holy Scriptures, and having by these means gained a farther insight into the nature of man's spiritual disorder, and of the remedy afforded in the Gospel, this necessarily led him to make a considerable alteration in his preaching, both as to the choice of his subjects and the manner of his address. Convinced that the divine testimony was the only sure ground of a divine Faith, he was careful to affert nothing that was not immediately drawn from the word of God; it being now his great aim and study, to use his own

phrase, to be a good Bible Divine.

But of all these particulars the Reader will gain a clearer knowledge from the following Meditation written by him at

his return from a meeting of neighbouring Clergymen, who

met together for the purpose of religious conversation.

Seeing the Gospel-Revelation is a dispensation of Grace; a remedy for a fallen creature; we must needs be sensible of those effects which the fall hath had on us, ere we can make

a right use of the Gospel.

For my own part, I lived many years in an entire ignorance of a corrupted nature; although I had learnt to reason in a fpeculative and historical way upon man's degeneracy. Since it hath pleafed God, in some measure, to enlighten the eyes of my understanding, I look back upon those days of blinde nefs, and plainly fee that while I kept to an external customary decency, and in some sense regularity, I was influenced by, and acted upon two hidden principles, as contrary to God as darkness is to light; the one, a prevailing defire of Reputation and being esteemed, which went through all I did, followed me into all companies, dictated all I faid, led me to compliance often in direct opposition to Conscience, made • me above all things fearful of being thought little of, directed all my Sermons both in writing and in speaking them, and in 6 short swayed my whole life, till, I hope, the few latter years of it: the other, a defire of Pleasure, which rendered me 6 flothful, indolent, and restless out of company, eager after • amusements, &c. but this was so subordinate to the other, that I was always best delighted with such entertainments as gave me an opportunity of fetting off any excellence I 6 might feem to have; fuch as Music and Dancing. By these two, the strong man kept the palace of my heart, and all was peace; and that in fo strange a manner, that I do not recollect the least suspicion of my being out of the way, for I had learned to rest upon my freedom from the groffest of Vices, and keeping a fort of strictness in attending upon the forms of my Ministry, and especially in engaging others to attend them.

Were I to fay with how many heart-felt pangs of fear and disquietude I have been brought during these latter years to any reasonable measure of indifference about the esteem of the world, I should describe the passages which have most engrossed my mind. The love of pleasure decayed first: but yet I could only part with it by degrees: and many things of that fort I continued in, when I had no pleasure in them, because I was ashamed to leave them.

In

In a letter from a Clergyman concerning the first question in the Office for the ordaining of Deacons, published in 1758,

Mr Walker fays of himself,

As I was ignorant of the Salvation that is in Christ Jesus, and of my want of him in all his offices, so I had not taken the least notice of the spiritual state of others. It was to me as a thing I had no concern with, what sins of the grosses kind were committed on every side of me. And after I was ordained, I had no sight or thought of the condition my Parishioners were in, though I had some desire that they should come to Church and Sacrament, and not drink, swear, and the like.

But the whole of this matter is explained more at large in a letter written by him in the year 1753, to a friend in London, wherein he gives a particular account of his Ministry at Truro

from the very beginning. In the year 1746, I undertook (as Curate) the charge of this populous and large Town, in many respects the principal Town in the County. God knows upon what unworthy views I did it, and how utterly disqualified my heart and head were for my ministerial trust. I had been some years Vicar of a neighbouring Parish. But, dear Sir, how must I have fuffered the poor fouls there to starve and perish, while I was only poffesfed of historical notions of all the vitals of · Christianity; the corruption of man's nature, his misery and help-· lessness; the satisfaction and sufficiency of Christ; the necessity of a renewed mind; the need of the work of the Spirit: These I knew onotionally, but neither felt nor taught them practically.-You must own I ought to go forrowing to the grave upon a review of fix years to passed. Nevertheless I was thought well of, and indeed esteemed beyond most of my Brethren for my Regularity, Decency, Endeavours to keep up external attendances, and somewhat or other in my Public Addresses. • Would to God I were the only one intrusted with the Gospel in these circumstances! It was at least a year after the kind Providence of God brought me hither, ere I fell under confiderable suspicions or uneafiness about myself and my manner of preaching; when by the frequent conversation of a Chrisf tian Friend, (verily the first person I had met with truly posfeised of the mind of Christ), I became sensible all was wrong within and without. My uncafiness was rather abiding than e violent, possibly because my life had been free of gross fins, having

having been used in a good measure to follow the direction of my Confcince; and the change wrought upon me was flow,

till under a variety of means I was brought to the knowledge of

the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

In the beginning of the above account our Author reflects with concern upon the unworthy views which prevailed upon him to undertake the Curacy of Truro. In order to acquaint the curious Reader what these unworthy views were, I shall here interrupt the narrative to inform him, that in many private conversations he often told me, that he was not actuated by the least measure of a ministerial spirit at the time of his first coming to Trure; but that his only motive in going to live in that populous Town, in preference to any other place in the County, was the greater refort of company, and that he might take his pleasure at the Assemblies, and particularly in dancing .-Such was the bent of his inclinations before he was partaker of the Grace of God in truth. He was naturally a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God.

The Letter goes on: As this work was going forward in myself, the people were made partakers of the effects of it; by and by I began to deal with them as loft finners, and beat down formality and felfrighteousness, and to preach Christ. The fruit of this by the mighty working of the Spirit quickly appeared. It was a new way to them. They were surprised, and grew angry, onot without an evident fear resting upon them, and an interesting curiosity to hear me again of this matter. I have reason to judge that almost all of them have been one time or other awakened more or less, although I fear many of them have rejected the counsel of God against themselves. But in the · mean time some more sensibly pricked in their hearts, came to me inquiring what they must do? The number of these continually increasing, I thought my utmost diligence was needful towards them. They were univerfally ignorant in the groffest degree. I was glad to give them as many evenings in the week as I could spare, appointing them to attend me f after their work was over, at my house. As there was no knowledge of divine things amongst them, and in consequence thereof they were incapable of instructing one another; and withal, as they were marked out by reproach, and had every art tried upon them to draw them away, they needed from me both instructions and cautions, which I was obliged for these reasons to give them, either singly, or by two or three together. This I have continued to do to the present time,

with no other variation, but that of using the help of those who had made any progress, to watch over beginners.

I had from the first engaged them frequently to converse together, and pray with one another, as I could put them together; and tho' the far greater part of them fell away from their awakenings, yet when a number of them seemed to be somewhat confirmed, they of their own accord met together in larger bodies, in their own houses, to read God's word, pray, sing Psalms, &c. This became pretty much practised about two years ago, and herein I lest them to themselves,

sonly giving them directions as need required.

By the Grace of God, the number of those, whose conduct seemed to express a lively faith, began now to be something considerable; for which reason, about the latter end of last Summer it was thought adviseable to form them into a religious Society, which after some delays was effected in the beginning of February. The number of Members is now up-

wards of feventy.\*

• While I was deliberating about this Society, which was to confift of fuch only as gave hopes of an edifying example, it was thought proper to call together as many others as were willing, in my house once a week, as a fort of nursery for the principal Society: and by talking and praying with them, we seem to have found some establishment among those who are weaker.

This hath been the progress of the work among ourselves,
wherein I have reason to believe, we have been much forwarded by the blessing of the Spirit upon a free and practical
Exposition of the Church Catechism, which I have after my poor
measure made by word of mouth the Sunday. Evenings of half

the year, an hour after fervice.
I have to add farther, as that which I doubt not will give you pleafure, that not long after the commencement of this

work at Truro, feveral Clergymen of us in the neighbourhood affociated ourselves under the name of the Parsons Club.

for mutual confultation and direction, in order to promote

the great end of our Ministry.'

In this letter, Mr Walker makes mention of two Societies; the one, of the more ferious people of the Town of Truro; the other,

<sup>\*</sup> It was afterwards considerably increased.

other, of some of the neighbouring Clergymen. Concerning each of these it will not, I presume, be disagreeable to the Reader, to hear somewhat more particularly; and it will be equally pleasing to me to lay before him the nature and design of these religious meetings, and the rules which each member was obliged to conform to; as I am in hopes, that by these means I may not only vindicate them from the imputation of being anywise offensive or contrary to the good order and discipline of the Church, but also shew forth their utility.

The former Society, confifting of the more ferious part of Mr Walker's Congregation at Truro, was divided into two classes; one of men, into which no woman could be admitted; another of married men, their wives, and other women, into which no unmarried man could be admitted. Each class meets every other week alternately. In drawing up the Rules for the Government of this Society, Mr Walker chiefly followed the plan laid down by the Reverend Dr Josiah Woodward, in his treatife, written in Queen Anne's time, under the title of An Account of the Rife and Progress of the Religious Societies in and about London, and of their endeavours for the Reformation of Manners. Which little book our Author dispersed amongst his People at Truro, at the time of their first affembling in this manner, purposely to remove every ground of prejudice, because in this tract the most considerable objections against Religious Societies are fully answered.

The whole proceedings of this Society are as follow.

## CONSIDERATIONS

LAID BEFORE THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY,

Being the substance of the first charge or exhortation spoken at its opening by the Director.

BRETHREN,

OU expect that I lay before you the defign of this Society, and give you some cautions concerning it. The defign is threefold: 1. To glorify God. 2. To be quickened and confirmed ourselves. 3. To render us more useful among our neighbours.

ı.

As a fociety, we shall be better able to glorify God; for hereby

hereby we bear a more evident testimony to the cause of
Christ, and make a more avowed consession of him and his
words in these evil days, than we could do when separate.

• Every one of you desires that the kingdom of Jesus Christ were more established, and more honourable in the world than it is, and you join your hand with others to promote so defirable an end. Take these cautions for this purpose:

. Look upon yourself as one associated with others in vin-

dication of your Master's honour.

 Never be ashamed of him or his doctrine, or of this Society.

3. Demean yourfelf to every one as his disciple, by walking
 in humility, meekness, heavenly-mindedness, and charity,

after Christ's example.

- 4. Keep yourself heedfully from all things which may disgrace your Master and this Society; such as pride, in a conceit
  of your knowledge or attainments, or that you are a member
  of this Society.—Valuing yourself upon any distinction in
- ftation or wealth.—Sinking into a worldly frame,—or declining into floth and idleness.—Practising the least dishonesty,
- or conniving at the dishonesty of others.—Making compliances, to avoid shame or to promote worldly interest.—Falling into lukewarmness and forgetting your first love.—Slighting

public ordinances.
5. Often, especially before and after great trials, reslect
that you belong to a religious Society for promoting the glory
of Christ.

II.

- The fecond defign of this Society is to be quickened and confirmed ourselves. For hereby we shall be better able to maintain the war against our enemies, especially against the world, and to grow in grace; seeing in this association we may expect the Spirit to bless our exercises:—shall have the benefit of mutual advice and reproof: shall be more hardy to oppose the temptations besetting us in this wicked world:—
  fhall walk under a peculiar restraint, as being members of a religious Society.—And shall be assisted by the prayers, as of one another, so of all good men in the whole Christian Church.
  To this end:
  - 1. Watch over one another in love.
- 2. Be willing to hear of your faults, and of the fears and fuspicions of these your friends concerning you.

' 3. Be

- 6 3. Be watchful against any disgust to one another; and if any arise in you, without delay tell the party, and if that avail not, tell the director.
- 6 4. Defire the prayers one of another, and pray for one an-

5. Be fure you rest not on your being a member of this Society,—seek continually to cast off all self-dependence.

6. Watch the least decay of love to Christ, or of zeal for

his honour and the good of fouls.

7. Confirm continually upon your heart the obligations you lie under as a Member of a religious Society.

#### TIT.

- The third defign of this Society is to render us more useful among our neighbours. Hereby we are observable.—People will not be so easily quiet in their sins.—Good examples carry a brighter and more convincing light, confounding the works of darkness. To this end,
  - . Be careful to fet a Christian example before the world.

2. Think not to gain any by making compliances.

3. Discountenance all such things as you see prejudicial to
others, such as taverns, ale-houses, gaming, and many sports
which are destructive to souls.

4. Shew all love to men's fouls and bodies.

- <sup>6</sup> 5. Avoid all disputings, which proceed from pride, and <sup>6</sup> nurse contention and variance.
- 6. Do not be angry with those who blame this Society, but meekly and filently bear with them.

. 7. Do not in your heart despise others, because they are

onot Members of this Society;

8. Nor shew any valuing of yourselves because you are.
Never speak of yourself as a Member, unless with a view of doing others good.

### MOTIVES.

- 1. Real disciples do more than nominal professors.
- 2. The Spirit will strengthen and comfort you.
- 3. You will have the bleffing of a quiet conscience.
  4. You are engaged in the most honourable service.
- 5. You will promote the interest of your Master.

6. He will acknowledge your labours in the day of his appearing. Amen. So be it.

RULES

### RULES

## AGREED UPON FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SOCIETY.

#### RULE I.

A S the fole design of this Society is to promote real holiness in heart and life, every Member of it is to have

this continually in view, trufting in the divine power, and gracious conduct of the holy Spirit, through our Lord Jesus

Christ, to excite, advance, and perfect all good in us.

#### RULE II.

That in order to the being of one heart, and one mind, and to prevent all things which gender strifes, as well as to

remove all occasion of offence from being taken against this

Society, no person is to be admitted a Member, or allowed to

continue fuch, who is a member of any other meeting, or follows any other preaching than that of the established ministry

of the Church of England.—That none be members but fuch as attend the Sacrament every month, and that no person be

as attend the Sacrament every month, and that no person be at any time introduced except by request of the Director.

#### RULE III.

'That no person be admitted a Member but upon the recommendation of the Director, with the consent of the majority of Members then present.—And that the Director be the Reverend Mr Walker.'

#### RULE IV.

• That the Members of this Society meet together one evening in a week, at a convenient place, and that they go home at nine o'clock.—And that all matters of business be done before the sentences begin.

#### RULE V.

That every Member give constant attendance, and be prefent at the hour of meeting precisely.—And that whoever
absents himself four meetings together without giving a satisfactory account to the Director, which shall by him be communicated to the Society, shall be looked upon as disaffected
to the Society.

RULE

#### RULE VI.

That to prevent confusion, no person be removed from this Society but by the Director, who shall be present on fuch occasions.—That any Member do beforehand apply to the Director, in case he judges such removal necessary.—That a diforderly \* carriage, or a proud, contentious, disputing temper, (the greatest adversary to Christian love and peace)

be fufficient ground for fuch complaint and removal.

#### RULE VII.

That all the Members, confidering the fad confequences of vanity and amusements over the nation, do in charity to the fouls of others, as well as to avoid the danger of fuch things themselves, look upon themselves as obliged to use peculiar caution, with respect to many of the usual amusements, however innocent they may be, or be thought in themselves; fuch as cards, dancing, clubs for entertainment, playhouses, fports at festivals and parish-feasts, and as much as may be parish-feasts themselves.-Lest by joining herein they should be a hindrance to themselves or their neighbours.

#### RULE VIII.

That with the confent of the Director, the major part of the Society have power to make a new order when need requires, but that the propofal for this purpose be made by the Director. And that any Member may confult the Director hereupon before the day of meeting.

#### RULE IX

That persons disposed to become Members of this Society. must first be proposed by the Director, in order that the Members of the Society may observe their conduct for the · space of three months before admittance.'

#### RULE X.

- That every Member do confider himfelf as peculiarly ob-'liged
- By a disorderly carriage we mean, not only the gross commission of scandalous sins, but also what are esteemed matters of little moment
- in the eyes of the world; such as a light use of the words Lord, God,
- · Jesus, &c. in ordinary conversation; which we cannot but interpret as an evidence of the want of God's Presence in the heart.—The doing
- · needless business on the Lord's day.—The frequenting ale-houses or
- taverns without necessary business.

- · liged to live in an inoffensive and orderly manner, to the glory
- of God and the edifying his neighbours.—That he study to
- advance in himself and others, humility, faith in our Lord
- Jesus Christ, love to God, Gospel repentance, and new obe-
- dience; wherein Christian edification consists. And that in
- 'all his conversation hereupon, he sticks close to the plain and
- obvious fense of the holy Scriptures, carefully avoiding all
- "niceties and refinements upon them."

#### RULE XI

That these Orders shall be read over at least four times in the year by the Director; and that with such deliberation, that each Member may have time to examine himself by them.

#### RULE XII.

That the Members of this Society do meekly and humbly join together in the following offices of devotion.

#### THE OFFICE OF DEVOTION

#### USED WEEKLY AT THE MEETING OF THE SOCIETY.

The Director shall read these sentences himself, every one standing.

God is very greatly to be feared in the affemblies of his faints, and to be had in reverence by all that are round about him. Psalm lxxxix. 8.

· God is a righteous Judge, strong and patient; and God is

' provoked every day. Psalm vii. 12.'

God will bring every work into judgement, with every fecret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.—
Ecles. xii. 14.

• He that hideth his fins shall not prosper, but he that confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. Proverbs xxviii.

· 13.

'If any man fin, we have an advocate with the Father, 'Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our fins. I John ii. 1, 2.'

O come let us worship, and fall down, and kneel before

the Lord our Maker. Pfalm xcv. 6.'

## Then shall be said these three Collects, all kneeling:

Frevent us, O Lord, in all our doings,' &c.

Bleffed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures, &c.'

O God, forafmuch as without thee we are not able to please thee, &c.'

All feating themselves, a portion of Scripture shall be read. kneeling down they shall join in this confession of sin:

· Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men, &c.'

'Our Father, which art in heaven, &c.'

## After which the Director alone shall say:

· Almighty and everlasting God! who hatest nothing that 'thou-hast made, &c.'

O most holy and bleffed God, the Creator, Governor, and Iudge of all! who hateth falshood and hypocrify, and wilt onot accept the prayer of feigned lips; but hast promised to flew mercy to fuch as turn unto thee by true faith and repentance; vouchfafe, we pray thee, to create in us clean and upright hearts, through an unfeigned faith in thy Son our Saviour. To us, indeed, belongeth shame and confusion of face; we are not worthy to lift up our eyes or our voice towards heaven; our natures are deprayed, and our ways have been perverse before thee. O let not thy wrath rise against us, lest we be confumed in a moment; but let thy merciful bowels yearn over us, and vouchfafe to purify and pardon us through thine all-fufficient grace and mercy in our Lord Jefus • Christ: fince it hath pleased thee to offer him up as a facrifice for finners, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to cleanse us from all iniquity through his blood. We believe that he is able to fave to the uttermost those that come unto thee by him, and we do earnestly defire to embrace him as our Prince and Saviour: O give us repentance and remission of sins through his name. All we like theep have gone aftray, every one in his own way; good Lord, receive us into thy fold through this great Shepherd of fouls, and be pleased to lay on him the iniquity of us all. And as we have much to be forgiven, be pleased to incline our hearts to love thee much, who forgivest iniquity, transgression, and sin. Give us that faith that worketh by love; and fuch love as will constrain us to have regard to all thy commandments. And make us to look carefully to all our ways, that we may never again do any thing, whereby thy holy name may be blasphemed or thine authority

despised.

Give us the deepest humility, without which we can never be accepted of thee, our infinitely condescending God: make us continually to tread in the steps of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jefus Christ; being of a meek and quiet spirit, always influenced by the highest love of thee our God, and

by the most charitable disposition towards all men.

Vouchfafe to endue us with the faving knowledge of spiritual things, that we may receive all thy truths in the love of them, in all patience, purity, justice, temperance, godlie ness, and brotherly kindness; that we may adorn our holy profession and resemble the divine goodness of thee our heavenly Father .- And fince we are not only weak and frail, but corrupt and finful, vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us by the power of thy holy Spirit, that we fall not from our avowed stedfastness in all Christian duty. Preserve us from all the fin and vanity to which our age, condition, and nature are prone, and to which the devil and this world may at any time tempt us.

Glorify, good God, thy strength in our weakness, thy grace in our pollution, and thy mercy in our falvation. May our holy Religion be grounded and fettled in our hearts, that out of the good treasure of a gracious heart, our speech may be favoury and our conversation exemplary; that we may be fruitful in all good works, even to our old age, and to our

· last day.

Fit us, we pray thee, for every state of life into which thy Providence shall cast us; prosper our lawful undertakings; preferve us night and day, and prepare us for an hopeful

death and a bleffed eternity.

Be pleased, we beseech thee, to bless all those Societies who in truth apply their hearts to thy fervice and glory; we pray thee, be pleased to strengthen, establish, and settle both them and us in thy holy faith, fear, and love. Let nothing in this world discourage us from the pursuit of those holy purposes, which thy Spirit hath at any time put into our hearts and minds. But make us all faithful to thee our avowed God

and defired portion, even unto death; that we may at last (with thy whole Church) be partakers of that eternal life and perfect blifs which thou hast promised through Jesus Christ, thy only begotten Son, our Mediator and Redeemer. Amen. Almighty and everliving God, who by thy holy Apostle hast taught us to make prayers and supplications, &c.

Then all standing up, a Psalm shall be sung and | a Sermon read, or a charge given by the Director. After which some suitable prayer shall be used as he shall judge fit.

Then all standing up, this exhortation to humility shall be read:

My Brethren, fince the great God has often affured us in his holy word," "That he will refult the proud and give grace " unto the humble, James iv. 6. I Peter v. 5." Let us confider that all our undertakings, though never fo good, will fail and come to nought, unless we be truly and deeply humble, Luke xiv. 11. Indeed it cannot be otherwise; because the proud person quits his reliance on God to rest in himself: which is to exchange a rock for a reed.

Alas! what are we, poor empty things! Gen. xxxii. 10. Yea, what is worse, we are condemned perishing sinners; we have perhaps understanding now, but God can soon turn it into madness, Dan. iv. 42. We may have some attainments in grace, but spiritual pride will wither all, and soon • reduce us to a very profligate and wretched estate, 1/a. lxvi. 6 2. fuch as we have feen others fall into, who have begun in the spirit, and ended in the flesh.' "What have we, that we " have not received?" I Cor. iv. 7. And even that, he who

gave it may as foon take away.

'Ye that are young in years, and younger in grace, I Tim. 'iii. 6. are in danger of felf-conceit, and of being puffed up; which is a quickfand in which thousands have been swallowed up and perished. It is not in vain that the Apostle requires, "that young men be exhorted to be fober minded," Tit ii. 6. Prov. xvi. 18. which he elsewhere explains when he says; " Let no man think of himself more highly than he ought to " think, but to think soberly," Rom. xii. 3. Isa xiv. 12, 13

' || The Director, when abroad or indisposed, is to appoint what Sermon shall be read, and by whom.

By pride the angels fell from heaven, I Tim. iii. 6. and if ever we climb up to those blessed seats from which they are fallen, it must be by the gracious steps of humility and low-liness of mind, Luke xviii. 14. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed less the fall," I Cor. x.:2.—
Let us walk humbly with our God," and ever have lowly thoughts of our vile selves, Rom. xi. 20. and of our poor attainments, and of our desective performances: and with St Paul (who was nothing behind the very chiefest Apostles) let us always say, "I am nothing," 2 Cor. xii. 11.

Let us therefore now fing to the praise and glory of God,

' to whom alone praise is due.

A Pfalm being fung, the Director shall say, It is very meet and right,' &c.

All Shall join,

'Therefore with angels and archangels,' &c.

The Director alone,

'The grace of our Lord Jefus Christ, &c. Amen.'

THE Members of this Society, besides convening together, in the manner related above, for the purposes of prayer and reading, affemble themselves once a week in smaller numbers to speak to each other concerning their peculiar trials, and to receive the benefit of mutual advice in a free conversation. The time for this meeting is not limited to any particular day or hour, but appointed at fuch feafons as are most convenient to the parties concerned. By this means it is fo contrived as never to interfere with their worldly bufinefs; and therefore, fometimes they affociate early in the morning before fervice on the Sunday; fometimes in the intervals between fervice; and at other times in the evenings of a week-day after their work is over. On these occasions not less than five, or more than eight, are prefent, who at all other times are inspectors over one another's conduct. Their feveral distributions are allotted fuitably to their age, condition, and circumstances, that so their trials being nearly the fame, they might be better able to strengthen and exhort each other. The married men meet together by themselves, the unmarried by themselves, and so the women in like manner. In order to avoid confusion, and to

put them in a proper method of carrying on such a design with due order and regularity, Mr Walker drew up a small treatise which he stiled, Regulations and Helps for promoting Religious

Conversations among Christians.

In this tract it is proposed, that a select number of Christian friends do meet together weekly, for improving each other in Christian knowledge and practice, by the grace of God. The following Regulations are submitted to consideration, as proper to preserve order, and to promote the ends designed by such a meeting.

#### REGULATIONS.

\* That every person come to the meeting now proposed with a prepared heart, expecting through divine grace to receive improvement in saving knowledge, self-conviction, and edification.

II. That the conversation be introduced and ended with

· prayer.

'111. That they speak freely and lay open their hearts, as far

as their own case, or that of others, may require.

' IV. That they beware of conceit in delivering their fentiments, and of diffidence in being afraid to speak them.

v. That in the spirit of meekness and humility, counting

others better than themselves, they do warn each of their faults, freely and affectionately examining every thing thotroughly.

vi. That the conversation be confined to the state of one

another, and that all prying curiofity be excluded.

vii. That each person be allowed to speak in turn, and that as briefly as possible.—That none be interrupted while speaking; and when all have delivered their sentiments, that the

enquirer may then apply what has been faid to his own case,

and nothing farther be faid on that fubject, unless the enquirer should defire any person more fully to explain himself.

viii. That each person do carefully examine and watch over his heart, that no disgust be taken against any who have spoken freely to his case, or may seem to have more know-

· ledge or experience than himself.

• ix. That they often ask their own hearts, whether they • have a defire to come to such conversation? and if not; • why?

4 x. That afterwards each person carefully recollect and endeavour to improve the conversation.

' XI. That what paffes in fuch conversation be not divulged

elfewhere.'

To these Regulations are annexed proper inquiries concerning growth in humility, faith in Jesus Christ, the love of God and of our neighbour, and divers other interesting points, by way of help for matter of conversation. At sometimes they proceed in their conferences upon questions taken out of this treatife, at others they speak indifcriminately whatever lies nearest upon their hearts. One constant question is, If either of them have observed any thing unbecoming or suspicious in the conduct of the rest; and each, in their turn, is very free in mentioning fuch fuspicions (if he has any) while the person spoken to is as ready to answer, whether to explain the reasons of fuch conduct, or to take shame for it, if wrong.

The mutual inquiries into the state of each others souls being finished, the Inquirer for the day (for each succeeds to this office by rotation) concludes with prayer, and if time permits,

they fing a hymn, and then part.

The other Society was composed of the neighbouring Clergy, and proper regulations for the conducting such a meeting were affented to by the feveral Members of the Club. The end and defign of this intercourse among the Clergy is exhibited in the following extract from a letter written by one who was himfelf

engaged in it. Mr Walker was the person who first proposed a friendly meeting of neighbouring Clergymen, with a view to improve one another in Christian knowledge, for the better edification of the people committed to their care; and to encourage each other if, as it was likely, any difficulty or opposition should arise to either of them in the more vigorous discharge of the ministerial duty. An outcry was soon made against this · meeting, both by Clergy and Laity, as if the whole Society was 6 methodiffically inclined; though nothing is more certain, than that all the members of it were zealously attached to the · Church of England or present ecclesiastical establishment, both in its doctrine and discipline. Their number originally confisted of seven, to whom were afterwards added four others: of whom, before Mr Walker's death, four had died, two had left the meeting through fear of the world, and two had been removed to a fituation too diffaut to give attendance.— It

It was proposed to meet seven months in the year, on the first Tuesday after every full moon, at their several houses by turns; to meet at ten; to dine at two; to have two plain dishes of meat and no more; not to stay later than six o'clock; and that the person, at whose house the meeting was, ' should take care, that one only speak at a time, and that no new matter be brought on the carpet, till the matter in queftion (whatever it were) should be fatisfactorily adjusted.

Whatever subject the conversation turned upon, every Member of the Club was defired to draw up his fentiments in writing against next Club day, either in the form of a Ser-'mon, or what other form each person saw fit, for the better affurance that the subject was well digested.

Before the Club proceeded to business, they always offered

up their joint prayers to God for his bleffing, in a form col-· lected by Mr Walker, from the Liturgy, The Whole Duty of · Man, and Mr Jenks's Devotions.

The following Queries were thought proper for every

· Member to put to himself often.

" Query 1. What is it, that I have in view, or what is my ' mind chiefly engaged upon? Is it the fetting forth of God's glory? or, is there fome worldly meaner matter, which has as much room in my thoughts as that?

6 2 When I fit down to make a Sermon, or when I go into the pulpit to preach it, is my mind running on the performing of a task, or on gaining esteem by performing it well? or, am I chiefly concerned to do fomething for God?

43. Would I rather that the interest of Christ, whose Minifter I am, be advanced in the world, though I should thereby forfeit ease and other conveniences, than favour these, to the • neglecting of his interest?

4. What is my view as a Member of this Society? How may I know, whether I am employing myself here to the best purposes, agreeably to the design of the meeting?

5. Do I continually look up for divine Grace to accompany and prosper my ministrations? And, in this strength, am I often enquiring after the fuccess of my ministry with anxiety? And, relying on Gospel promises for this strength, am I continually feeking it in prayer, public and private?

6. Am I fatisfied with the answer, that my conscience makes to these questions, as I could wish to be when I shall be lying on my death-bed, when every thought will fink to

the bottom of my foul, and when I am just about to be called upon to render up my account of this important charge and

" ministry?"

We pass on now to give some farther account of Mr Walker and his public labours. Though he had formed to himfelf a plan of happiness in the enjoyment of his ease, in the company of his Friends, and in partaking of pleasurable amusements; it pleased the God of all Grace to convince him of the error of his way, and to cut out a work of a far different nature for the employment of his thoughts and time, by making use of him as an instrument in his hands to turn many from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. The work of Grace went on gradually in his own foul. Nor was it without much felfdenial and opposition to his fears and his connections in life, that he began to declare to others the convictions which had newly impressed his heart. Being caressed by all companies, wherever he went, as a man of good understanding and good manners, he was called upon to give up many of the choicest comforts of this life for the fake of the Gospel; because he evidently forefaw that, unless his former companions should be brought to experience the same change which he had entered upon, they would at least look cool upon him, if not separate him from their company, or perhaps cast a slur upon his reputation. How great a trial this is to a man who is naturally fond of esteem, those only can be proper judges, who have themselves been under the same dissicult circumstances. Yet in despite of every carnal and selfish motive, which the love of eafe, the apprehensions of shame, or the fear of mens faces, might suggest to the contrary, the Lord preserved him faithful to the light he had received, and emboldened him to make an open and unreferved profession of the truth, in proportion as he himself became acquainted with it.

The fame zeal that influenced his private conduct appeared also in his discharge of the duties of the Ministry. In his public addresses from the pulpit, of which he seldom omitted to prepare a new one for every Sunday, he endeavoured rightly to divide the word of Truth, by distributing to each of his audience a portion suitable to their several states. Having in view the glory of God and the salvation of the souls committed to his charge, as the great end of his preaching, he studied not so much to please the ear, as to inform the mind and amend the heart. To this end he applied with closeness and

energy the fpirituality of God's Law, together with the curses denounced against the transgressor, to the careless Sinner, in order to beget in him a conviction of his lost estate, and to awaken him to a sense of his danger. The more decent Formalist, (who differs from the former in restraining himself from acts of grosser sin, and in observing the externals of Religion, while his heart continues unhumbled and unconverted) he stattered not on account of his fair outside, but faithfully represented to him the folly and absurdity of resting in a form

of Godliness void of the porver thereof.

To the ferious Christian, who was already made sensible of the corruption of his nature, and defired to ferve God in spirit and in truth, in the way of his appointed ordinances, he laid open the plan of the Gospel in its various parts, as a scheme devised by infinite Wisdom for the recovery of finful fallen creatures: to fuch as, by the renunciation of their own wifdom, righteousness and strength, were prepared to receive a proffered falvation, he preached Christ Jesus, a Prophet both willing and able to teach them by the co-operation of his Word and Spirit; a Priest to intercede for them by the meritorious facrifice of his death; and a King to protect and govern them by fending the facred influence of his Spirit into their hearts.— Thus he taught the true believer to behold his fins expiated in the blood of the Lamb of God, which taketh a way the fin of the world; to fee his person accepted in the righteousness of his Redeemer, and to rest in nothing short of a real and universal change in heart and life, that he might become a new creature, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Nor is it to be forgotten, that, while he endeavoured both to beget and to improve the divine life in the hearts of his audience, he strenuously enforced, as an eminent part of it, the necessity of observing the relative and focial duties in civil life. Besides this general tendency of his Sermons, he occasionally enlarged upon such subjects as, by his continual intercourse with his people, he perceived it expedient for him to speak upon. His discourses, after he had preached them, were read on the Sunday evening in the Society, and afterwards handed from one to another, by which means the matter of them was more deeply imprinted on the minds of the hearers, and the knowledge of Religion more generally dispersed. Besides his stated Sermons on Sunday mornings, there were other occasional Sermons called Gift Sermons, established

blished by former benefactions, on some week days. And on all the Christmas holidays, on the Easter and Whitsun holidays, he had always Lectures in the afternoons, on some portion of Scripture, either relating to the feason, or else such as were fuitable to the state of the more serious part of the congregation which attended him. This struck an awe into the place, and prevented manifold abuses, such as players and cock-fighting, &c. against which he openly bore his testimony. But his heart was most set upon the much neglected duty of Catechifing, in which he spent every Sunday evening, from fix to eight, from the beginning of February to the end of April, and again from the beginning of August to the end of October. This he did to a very numerous congregation. In the Summer he had a Lecture every Thursday evening. And in the Winter quarter he Lectured on Christ's Sermon on the Mount every Sunday evening. All this he did in public, besides his Lectures every Tuesday in the Society-room, which he was at last prevailed with, on account of his health, to give up. It pleased God, that in the last two years of his Ministry, a considerable number of young people were awakened; on which occasion, he set up a private Lecture to them in his own room twice in the week in the evening. This meeting was fo crowded and fo hot that his friends evidently faw that his strength was much impaired, and that his life would be shortened by it; yet the undertaking seemed to be so charitable a defign for the good of young fouls, and he was fo intent upon it, that they did not care to press him to defift from it. Indeed his compassion to the souls of perishing finners appeared to be his shining grace; infomuch, that when in conversation any hardened and impenitent finner was mentioned, he feemed to express an inward pungent diltress of soul. His labours hitherto mentioned, were publickly known. But his room for private advice was daily frequented, except on Saturdays; which day he always referred to himself to prepare his discourse for the Sunday; so that from first to last he thought that about a thousand of the inhabitants of the town, besides Arrangers from the adjacent parts, had been with him for private advice regarding the state of their souls. After he became fo much engaged, he had little leifure for studying the works of others; the Bible was then almost the only book he applied himself to; from this facred fountain he drew that deep and practical knowledge, which his charitable heart was always ready to communicate to others. After

After it had pleafed God to bless his ministrations at Truro. in fo remarkable a manner, that the number of people, in whom an appearance of a real change of heart and life was visible, became considerable, he thought that a new and spiritual relation commenced between him and his flock; and accordingly it became his fettled judgment, that he ought not, on any worldly confideration, to leave them, unless Providence should open to him a more extensive field of usefulness to the Church of Christ, or he should be removed by superior authority. This may account for his giving up the Vicarage of Talland, to which he was presented in the year 1747, by the Trustees of the will of his late Patron, Walter Kendall, Esq. Having the Bishop's leave for absence, he held this Vicarage for a time, till growing diffatisfied in his confcience concerning the justifiableness of non-residence, he resigned it, and could never afterwards be induced to accept of another living, though he had the offer of four. Yet he went not about this affair with a precipitant zeal, but with his usual calmness of judgment and deliberation; and after confulting some able Divines on the Subject of Pluralities and Non-residence, and among the rest the well known Treatife of the late Dr. Newton. This circumstance, though often talked of between him and his friends, was never mentioned without his expressing at the same time how great a burden he found himself delivered from, when he gave up a charge of fouls, whom he had it not in his power to inspect. After this he was not only content, but even satisfied in his low circumstances, though they became reduced beyond what might have been reasonably expected: and when he was no longer able to support the expence of house-keeping, he went into poor lodgings; where, though his board and habitation were of the most ordinary kind, yet, as his mind was wholly intent upon spreading the saving knowledge of the Gospel, he lived in peace and calmness.

There yet remains another instance of his love to souls to be taken notice of, which I am unwilling to omit; not only out of respect to his memory, as it shews his unwearied assiduity in promoting the interests of his Master's kingdom, but likewise with a view, that others who have a like opportunity

afforded to them, may herein follow his example.

In the beginning of November, in the year 1756, three companies of General Anstruther's regiment of foldiers were fent into Winter-quarters at Truro. The zeal of our pious Mini-

ster engaged him to set to work to promote the knowledge and practice of Religion among them, and it pleased God to give a peculiar bleffing to his labours exerted on this occasion. Of this matter I am able to give a more satisfactory account, having by me a letter of Mr Walker's, wherein he gives a detail of it to his Friend, out of which I present the Reader with

the following extract.

It is my way, in writing to my Friends, to fpeak what is most nearly on my heart, and especially if it be any thing which I may hope will excite their prayers, and engage their intercessions in my behalf. Such is the circumstance I have onow to communicate respecting the success of the Gospel among the Soldiers quartered in this Town. I endeavoured to lose no time with them from their first arrival, but without delay preached a Sermon extraordinary on their account on Sunday afternoon, called by the people here the Soldier's · Sermon. There was at first great difficulty to get their attendance to hear it; for though they were ordered to be at · Church in the morning, and brought thither by their Officers, yet they used to turn off at the door. In this point I was helped by the zeal of my dear People of the Society, who made it their bufiness to speak to these poor creatures, e giving them proper advice, and prevailing on a few of them to be at Church, as was wished. They soon became a larger " number; and our labours were fo bleffed to them and us, that in less than three weeks a full hundred of them came to my house asking, What they must do? This was what I aimed at, an opportunity of personal and free conversation. effects have been very striking. One or two of the whole only excepted, you would have feen their countenances chaneging, tears often bursting from their eyes, and confessions of their exceeding finfulness and danger breaking from their mouths. I have fearcely heard fuch a thing as felf-excufing from one of them; while their defire to be instructed, and uncommon thankfulness for the least pains used upon them by any of us, have been very remarkable. Such promising fymptoms gave me great confidence it would come to something, and more fo when I found that many of them were greatly stirred up to pray. Many of them, as was to be exe pected, foon went back. Nevertheless, thus far both they and the others who never came near me in private, are plainly influenced, that a certain fear has restrained them from swearing and curfing, which, when they came hither, was univerfally their practice; has engaged them to attend public
worship, and at least so far biassed their conduct, that military
punishments are grown much less frequent among them.
There are about twenty who have kept close to the means of
Grace, and concerning whom I have encouraging hope that
a good work is begun in them. Indeed conviction of sin appears to have gone deep with them, and they are crying
after Christ with such marks of godly sorrow, as make me hope
it is indeed a sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation.

'These I intend shall be united together, when they leave us, under the name of the Soldier's Society, having already drawn up regulations for the purpose. And while they are here, they make a part of our Society, by the exercises of which, as well as by meetings I particularly appoint for their use, they seem to be much established. What such a Society of Soldiers may produce amongst that body of men God only knows; yet I would comfort myself with the hope it may please the Lord it shall go farther. It may be observed, that feven of these, namely, fix Scotchmen and one English Diffenter, have enjoyed the benefit of religious knowledge in their youth; the rest, excepting two, I find totally ignorant of every thing relating to Christ: And this, their total ignorance, has made me lament the superficial use, or entire neglect, of Catechifung amongst the English Clergy, by which, more than by any other thing, I am perfuaded the kingdom of darkness and sin is established in England?

At the conclusion of the extract from the above letter, it may not be improper to add, that the Officers who commanded these companies waited on Mr Walker, purposely to return him their thanks, and to acknowledge their obligations to him for the pains he had taken with their men, and for the reformation

begun among them.

Thus were the labours of this faithful Minister of Christ employed, in superintending the flock more immediately committed to his care; in giving his advice to those who came to consult him from neighbouring places; and in cultivating a spirit of Religion among those who seemed to be more accidentally thrown in his way. To obviate one groundless calumny with which the careless and lukewarm have often been apt to charge a life of serious godliness, as if it gave encouragement to the neglect of secular business, it may not be impro-

per to remark, that at the same time that he was earnest in pressing it upon all that came to him for advice, to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, as the one thing needful; he never forgot to exhort persons of all conditions and occupations in life, to apply themselves with diligence to the duties of their respective callings; telling them, as the strongest argument that could be urged, that the prosperity and tranquillity of their souls would be more effectually promoted by a careful and industrious attention to the business of their station, than by devoting themselves wholly to the study of Religion, to the neglect of those employments, which the place that God had assigned them in the world required at their hands. The truth of which observation I have heard confirmed by the experience of those who have hearkened to his coun-

fel in this particular.

His natural fagacity and penetration, improved by a continued attention to the motions of his own heart, in a course of daily circumspection and watchfulness (of which we shall have occasion to speak hereafter) gave him such an insight into the deceitful workings of the human breaft, and the nature of the trials where with our fpiritual adversaries strive to obstruct the operations of divine Grace, that it was usual with him, when any came to open their hearts to him, though they were strangers, by asking a few questions relating to the experience of their minds, to tell them what had passed within their breasts, even before they acknowledged it with their own lips. As a skilful Physician, when he is made acquainted with the principal and ruling fymtoms of a patient's diforder, knows how the whole fystem of the bodily machine is affected throughout: fo this Physician of fouls being informed of a prevailing corruption or temptation, could with ease discern what effect it would have upon the whole state of the heart.

We have feen after what manner Mr Walker addressed himfelf to those who opened their minds to him in a personal conference. His practice was to examine the disposition of their hearts to the bottom, that he might be the better enabled to advise them how to counteract the growing malady of their disorders, and to direct them to the proper means of recovery.— The like vein of heart-searching doctrine is to be observed throughout his writings. The Reader will not find in them a bare system of morality, calculated only to refine and polish the outward manners; our Author laid the foundation of Re-

ligion

ligion deep in a growing discovery and humbling sense of the finfulness, guilt, and impotence of our fallen nature, that he might the more clearly evince the necessity of our cordially receiving Christ Jesus in his mediatorial offices, as of God made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Let not human pride then take offence at feeing its corruptions exposed to view; rather let it bow its head to the dust, cover itself with shame and abasement, conscious of its unworthiness; and acknowledge, with a becoming thankfulness, the gracious interpolition of a Redeemer to recover us from our lost estate. But this thankful acceptance of relief through Christ cannot arise but out of a due conviction of our want thereof. Upon this perfuation, Mr Walker, in his Discourses delivered from the pulpit, in his conversations, and in his writings from the press, laboured to establish this point, namely, the necessity of becoming acquainted with our fallen state, because on it depends the right manner of our feeking pardon and acceptance with God, through the atoning blood and all-fufficient righteoufness of Christ, and of our attaining unto holiness of heart and life by the fanctifying operation of the Holy Spirit, in confequence of our being vitally united to him by faith. The following table exhibits a view of his works to the public.

 A Sermon on I Samuel xx. 3. at the funeral of a young man that was drowned as he was fwimming on Sunday, June 3, 1753.

2. The Christian, a set of practical Sermons, 1755.

A Sermon on Amos iv. 12. preached at Truro, 1756.
 A Letter from a Clergyman concerning the first question in the office for the ordaining of Deacons, 1758.

5. Regulations and Helps proposed for promoting Religious

Conversation among Christians.

6. A Discourse on the Necessity of being acquainted with our fallen state.

7. A Familiar Catechism, 1759.

8. A Short Instruction and Examination for the Lord's Supper.

9. A Treatise on Conviction of Sin.

10. A familiar Introduction to the Knowledge of ourselves, 1761.

Several other small Tracts were published monthly by himself and other Ministers,

Of the above mentioned writings, the Christian, a small volume, consisting of eleven Sermons, passed through a second and third edition in the years 1756 and 1759, with a recommendatory Preface, written by the Reverend Mr Thomas Adam,

Rector of Wintringham in Lincolnshire.

The two last Treatises, namely, Conviction of Sin, and Familiar Introduction to the knowledge of ourselves, were chiefly composed, and the Instruction and Examination for the Lord's Supper was revised and enlarged, by our Author in his last illness; at which time, tho' his bodily strength was almost worn down, and his spirits nearly exhausted with a lingering sever and atrophy; yet such was the vigour of his intellectual powers, that without requiring time to arrange his thoughts, and without hesitating for expression, he dictated to his amanuens the contents of each of these Tracts, as fast as he could commit them to paper, in all the clearness of argument and propriety of diction in which they now appear.

With regard to the Difcourses, to which this account of the Author's Life is prefixed, it will be requisite to advertise the Reader, that it was his design, if it had pleased God to have granted to him the continuance of life and health, to have gone through the whole of the Church Catechism in a set of practical and expository Lectures, and afterwards to have fent them abroad into the world. Which design, had Mr Walker lived to have accomplished, the Sermons upon the Moral Law, or Ten Commandments, which, as they now appear, are more particularly calculated to serve the purpose of Conviction of Sin, in order to enforce the necessity of taking refuge in Christ for justification, would then have been revised and made public under a different form, as holding forth likewise a rule of

life to the believing Profesfor.

The twenty-fifth Sermon upon the Catechifm, which was preached at Truro on the 27th of April, in the year 1760, and was the last Discourse delivered by our Author in public, deferves our particular notice. The subject is most awful and interesting; and the manner of treating it awakening and affecting. Having in some of the preceding Lectures considered, in a practical view, the resurrection of Christ as head of his body the Church; his ascension into the highest heavens to prepare a place for his people; and his session at the right hand of God as the great Advocate and Intercessor, pleading continually before the Father the propitiatory facrisce of his obedi-

ence unto death; in this he represents him at his second coming as univerfal Judge fummoning all mankind before his righteous Tribunal The folemn transactions of the day of Judgment being, as should feem to us accidentally, the subject of Mr Walker's last address to his Parishioners, it gave him an opportunity of speaking to them in such a manner, that if he had been actually apprized that it should be his last Sermon, he could not have taken his leave of them more properly.— After a very ferious and earnest expostulation with the careless, idle, pleafure loving finner, he concludes with delivering as it were his dying words, to a congregation, among whom he had ministered so long a time with so much zeal and assiduity, in this remarkable paffage:

Well; we shall all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ together. There the controverfy between me calling upon you by the terrors of the Lord, and you determined to abide in your fins, will be decided. There it will appear whether your blood will be upon your heads, for your obstiate impenitency, or upon mine for not giving you warning. Christ will certainly either acquit or condemn me on this behalf; and if I should be acquitted herein, what will become of you? I tremble to think how so many words of mine will be brought up against you on that day! What will you fay, what will you answer, how will you excuse yourselves? O Sirs, if you will not be prevailed upon, you will eternally curse the day that you knew me, or heard one word from my mouth. Why, why, why will you die with fo aggravated a destruction? O think of the judgment, think of it, and you will not be able to hold it out against your own fouls. May the Lord incline you to do fo; may he cause this word to fink deep into your hearts; may he shew you all your danger; and with an outstretched arm bring you out of the hands of the devil, and translate you into the glorious kingdom of his dear Son, to his own glory and your unspeakable happiness, in the day of the appearance of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Even so, most mighty God and most merciful Father, for the same Jesus Christ's sake.'

With these striking words did this faithful servant of Christ

finish his public Ministry.

It has been made evident from the account of his constant attention to the duties of the facred office, that he spared no pains in using his most diligent endeavours for the promoting of God's glory and the edifying of the people committed to his charge: it will now appear from a few selected extracts, taken from his own papers, that he dictated no rule to others which he did not conform to himself. but that an intimate knowledge of his own heart, and a deep experience of an inward work of divine grace, enabled him to direct others with such peculiar skill, under their several trials in the way of salvation. Being himself converted, not to a notional affent remaining in the head, but to a lively operative saith working by love in the deep ground of the heart, he knew after what manner to strengthen his Brethren.

A Specimen of Mr Walker's Experiences, and of his Watchfulness over his own Heart.

Sunday, September 17, 1752. "THURSDAY night last I was visited with a sudden and violent disorder, which in a few minutes brought my life e into danger. Such was God's good pleasure. It was his fatherly goodness hereby to give me a more practical and interesting sense of death and eternity. Hereby he hath taught ome the great importance of every hour I live; I can fay now I feel it with a more active impression. May I number my restored days wisely! nor may the things of this life ever · more feparate eternal things from before my eyes! may I live to his glory, who hath thus lengthened my days! Remember, my foul, in the confusion of the hasty hour, how · little thou couldst do; just no more than present a broken refignation of thyself into the hands of thy heavenly Father. Remember how thou wast oppressed with a spiritual insensibility; and the objects of faith how dead and flat; how without either fear, or hope, or trust in any degree of lively exercise! Ah, my foul, the dying hour is not for the work of Religion, for gaining an interest in Christ. This must be the business of my healthy days. In these I must feek to humble my foul, renounce myfelf, cast off all dependence on myself, and every thing, which by the grace of God is wrought in me, and to work out my falvation, drawn by the · love of Jesus to yield myself to him, the purchase of his blood. Now I must seek peace in believing on the Son of God, and 6 prove • prove that I have a title to justification through him, by all the evidence of his spirit working in me. Keep me in this faith, thou Mediator, with whom I do heartily trust my foul. Yea, increase this faith in me. And let me know that I belong to thee, by the fanctification of my corrupt nature more and more. Sunk as I am into the grave and death of sin, let me hear the powerful voice of thy word, and feel thy quickening influences upon my heart, and come forth, and live in holy obedience to thy call. Yea, let me live no more to myself. Thou hast given me warning, a sufficient summons to be ready, that by and by I must be away. Let me live to thee, that thou mayst acknowledge me at thy judgment.

# Sunday, March 4, 1753.

By the endurance and goodness of God I am alive this day, and have been enabled without disturbance to renew the covenant of grace. Praise be to God, my mind was clear, my conscience quiet, and with due deliberation, and without distraction I was before the Lord. I must bless him also that the ordinance was with comfort. Faith seemed in exercise more than usual, to see, receive, and in some measure to appropriate Christ to me in communicating. Though always I have cause to complain of the hardness of my heart, yet onow I could in some fort mourn and love. I found heartiness in my purposes of serving the glory and interest of God in · Christ, and was forward to make a full surrender of myself, depending upon divine grace. It has been a day with me fignally marked with divine favour. Notwithstanding the insensibility and unbelief of my heart, I am returned rejoicing. What now shall I render unto the Lord? It may be, some greater trial than ordinary is at hand. Let me be mindful therefore of the vows I have this day made. Thy peculiar fuit, my foul, was that pride might no longer have dominion over us; that the lofs of mens opinion and esteem might not fright on one fide, nor the approbation of friends puff us up on the other. We fued also for a more enlarged spirit of love, that those who speak evil against us, or use us ill for the work's-fake, may be entertained with compassion and forgiveness, without resentment or hatred. We sued for this charitable mind and demeanor towards those mistaken persons, who, prejudiced to their own opinions, represent us as not d 2 · preaching

preaching the word of God foundly. Lord, it is thy pleafure to try me with the reproaches of the wanton and careless: and with the misapprehensions of those, who having conceived unsafe evidences of faith, blame me that I speak not as they do, and ignorantly oppose themselves. Lord, keep me in a charitable temper, to endure with meekness the outrages of the one and the prejudiced mistakings of the other of these, betwixt whom my lot is fallen to me! We intreated also thy bleffing on our Society of Ministers. Grant, O God, that it may be a bleffed instrument of reviving true practical Re-'ligion. Keep us from pride and debate, and jealoufy! Grant " us to watch over one another in love! and be thou ever with us, enlarging all our hearts with zeal, constancy and charity, and mortifying the world and our lusts continually; that as we are separated to the Ministry, we may mind this one thing, to feed the sheep. And to me, O my God, give all e needful direction, that I may speak boldly and prudently among them, humbly and affectionately, without pride or refentment. See now, my foul, the work before thee, but Ihrink not: remember how God hath visited thee this day. Be strong and of good courage, and yet be fearful lest thou e let any thing of all this flip. Thou great shepherd, leave me e not. Amen.

## Tuesday, April 27, 1756.

I have found myfelf this day greatly exercifed by fear of men. I would, I hope, be, and live wholly to God's glory, and act as his interests require; but I experience a lurking defire of man's esteem mixing with the natural timidity of my constitution, which makes me inwardly draw back from any approaching trial, in which I am to look in the face persons of any angry and violent temper. It is to the free and mighty influence of the Spirit of God I owe it, that this fear hath not dominion, and that in despite of it, I am enabled to persist in the ways of God and the discharge of my duty, in opposition to this secret enemy. Yet I have reason to suffer that though it doth not hinder me from doing, yet it cramps me in doing. I desire to wait with patience, to be thankful for the measure of liberty bestowed on me, and to believe always that his grace is sufficient for me.

How hard is it to be angry and fin not! as much as felf mixes, it is finful. I think not more than twice in my life have

\* have I been angry without plainly seeing sin. I suppose true Gospel Znh does not russe the temper, nor leave any perturbation behind it. It must be perfectly consistent with meekness; and is sinful, if not accompanied with compassion: He looked about upon them with indignation, being grieved at the hardness of their hearts." Surely our zeal and meekness bear proportion to our humility. I have most zeal and least wildsire when I am most humbled in the sense of my sins. Lord make me humble, Lord keep me humble.

### Tuesday, June 15, 1756.

I know not how many evil tempers I have found working this day; particularly, conceit, when conversing with \_\_\_\_\_.

I have been kept from trials this day; so can say nothing what degree of prevalence I am under of fear of men. I have come very short of that actual communion with God by meditation and ejaculation that I wish for.'

### Monday, June 28.

Sloth and business have prevented me the days past from continuing my journal, but I am sensible of the want of it.-I cannot walk closely with God without daily watchfulness and examination. Yesterday's Sermon related to a sense of the finfulness of fin, as the great principle on which converfion stands contradistinguished from servile fear. I cannot be fo clear as I wish on this point. - In private exercises I find 2 defire to ferve God, and wish to fee him glorified: but my heart I find exceedingly felfish, in the world.—This day on the road to - I enjoyed useful meditation two hours; my heart much drawn up to God, and approving his fervice and presence: but in the remainder of my journey I was confused, and fometimes found myfelf carried by carnal fears, and proud reasonings. I resolved to be filent in the company I was to meet, if I might not be ferviceable; and have found 6 this evening the need and difficulty of being fo; God grant ' me the spirit of meekness and charity.'

# Wednesday, June 30.

I find it exceeding difficult to hold communion with God, when not more immediately engaged in ministerial duties.

Conversation this day has been rather about Religion than Religious.

6 I want more of Christ's temper of meekness, having reason

to suspect myself too solicitous when blamed unjustly.-

I fee how vain it is to think of gaining Christ without forfak-

ing all. Lord, make me more and more dead to the world?

# Monday, July 5.

I was striving much in prayer last night and this morning for a sense of the sinfulness of sin. My heart seems to have been quickened by it through the day, to keep a little close with God: yet how often have I forgotten him! O that I could love him more! I have been kept pretty much from fear respecting an approaching trial, being possessed with desire of professing Christ, with some considence in his protection, and with compassion toward gainsayers. I have seen this day how needful it is to watch against a party spirit, and to love all that love Christ, leaving them to their own opinions, and to avoid love-destroying debates. I was rather affected, than piously devout in the prayers at a suneral. —I ought to guard against a fort of desponding thoughts from external circumfances; and from carnal proud reasonings in my own heart?

## Wednesday, July 7.

Frame disordered at waking, though otherwise when I lay down. My comfort is, my salvation depends not on me, but Christ, the same yesterday to day and for ever, though I am so changeable.—Do I choose God for my portion? If so, why do I forget him so often, and think of him so coldly?

### Monday, July 26.

• On reflection, I see my safest way is sitting down and abiding in the place I am called to. When absent from it, though
in the way of duty, I do not so well retain the possession of my
own mind.—This day I observed at waking, as I have often
done, that the application of my heart to think on God was
rather by force; it was not easy to keep him in view, though
I had so many causes of thankfulness.—I have been engaged
all this day in some needful service; yet find myself apt to
seek my own pleasure even in doing God's work. I ought
to be more sensible of the importance of my office, and to
depend upon and pray more earnestly for the influences of
God's

God's Spirit on myself and labours. To be humble in the fense of my vileness, and to believe the sufficiency of Christ, I find the two hardest things I have to attain.'

### Tuesday, August 10.

This Club-day. I have not found fuch defire after it as formerly, This is a great fault. I am not thankful as I ought for fuch friends and opportunities: nor do I meet them with fuitable defires of receiving and communicating good. I should regard the Club as a distinguished blessing, and as laying me under peculiar obligations; and be continually influenced by the expectations which the world has from us. God has removed some outward trials I have been under; yet I would remember that Christ is our peace.

### Wednesday, August 11.

Apt to wander in family prayer. My state is of very low advancement; more especially this appears by the frequent applications of my heart to God; a true spirituality of temper I suspect I need for this reason; and that suspicion demands my strictest inquiry.—Last week when in trials, I seem to have been better than this when out of them: let me inquire whether I am driven to Christ by necessity, or drawn by love.

### Monday, August 23.

The devotions of this morning were shortened by the expectation of business. Somewhat like this often happens, and demands my greater attention.—Great experience this day of a corrupted heart; though not signally overcome, yet not watchful as I ought.'

### Tuesday, August 24.

• Public duty incroached on the morning's private exercife.—
• Had this day for some hours a peculiar fear of falling away:
• I observed the actings of faith were weak; yet could not get
• them lively: seemed however determined for God in Christ.
• —I am certainly influenced by a principle which makes me
• not unwatchful against sin, and not altogether unready to
• duty: but is it from the right motive, faith working by love?
• Greatly wanting in thankfulness.'

dA.

June 6. 1757.

I am well fatisfied the defire of esteem, or fear of men, hath too much influence on my conduct. Lord, turn the fear of mens faces into a love of their fouls.

WE now come to finish this account of Mr Walker's Life and Ministry, by shewing his behaviour during his last illness, and what support he found from Religion, while in the near views of approaching death. This, it will be confessed on all hands, is a scene in which the truth and sincerity of a man's religion is put to the test. To disarm the king of terrors of every' appearance of horror, and to welcome his fummons as a call from a vain and miferable world to a world of endless and unspeakable felicity, is the fole property of a firm faith in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the refurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Now, as our Author perceived his foul to be greatly strengthened and established in grace, the nearer he advanced towards eternity, fo will the attestation of this matter of fact, which was ground of comfort to himself, be to others a special confirmation of the truths he maintained; when they are affured that under the influence of them he finished his days in peace, and committed his foul and body into the hands of God, without the least doubt of being received into an happy immortality.

After the 27th of April in the year 1760, as was before observed, Mr Walker was disabled from performing any farther fervice in the public congregation. At this time he was feized with a fever, which confined him feveral weeks to his room at Truro: when he had in some degree recovered, after the abatement of the fever, a cough still hung upon him, for which as it foreboded a confumption, he was ordered to Bristol for the use of the waters, in the month of August. Having staid two months there, with little or no benefit, he went in the Autumn to Kington in Warwicksbire, with an intention of spending some time with the Reverend Mr Talbot, Vicar of that Parish: but, a bad feafon of year coming on, he was ordered back to the Bristol wells. There he continued till the middle of December, when it was judged proper that he should be removed to some dry healthy spot in the neighbourhood of London, where he could enjoy the benefit of good air. Upon this, having be-

fore been invited by the Earl of Dartmouth to try the air at Blackheath, he went thither a few days before Christmas. Being fituated in a place fo near London he had an opportunity of having the best advice, but it was not in the power of medicine to stop the progress of his disease. It is worthy our notice to observe how remarkably the Providence of God raised up Friends to fupply his feveral wants through his illness. After refigning the Vicarage of Talland, the Curacy of Truro was the whole of his income. The pay was but small, and his expences were necessarily increased to a great degree by a long continued fickness. But he had refigned himself into the hands of God, and found the promise verified that he never will\* forfake those who committed themselves to the care of his Fatherly protection. Being in the house of the Earl and Countels of Dartmouth, he had all the affiftance that his critical fituation could require. Prefents also were conveyed to him from his Friends at Truro, and at other places, whose love to him was fuch, that they were ready to have furnished him with whatever supplies of money he might have stood in need of. And to the honour of those Gentlemen of the faculty who were confulted, it must be recorded, that as soon as they were severally apprized of the circumstances of their Patient, they not only gave their attendance gratis, but seemed to take delight in offering him their fervice.

It appeared to be ordered by a peculiar appointment of divine Providence, that Mr Walker, after he had finished his Ministry at Truro, should abide a considerable time in the large and populous City of Bristol, and that he should afterwards spend the last seven months of his Life in the neighbourhood of the great Metropolis. Several ferious persons, both of the Clergy and Laity, in and about London and Briftol, visited him frequently in his illness, to whom his conversation was bleffed in a very fingular manner. By his knowledge and experience he was eminently qualified to lead others to an acquaintance with their own hearts, and to the discovery of the comforts and privileges of the Gospel, as well as to instruct Ministers in the faithful discharge of their important office; so that when bodily weakness prevented him from preaching any more in public, by his talent in converfing, in which he remarkably excelled, he was made instrumental in promoting the glory of God, and the good of many fouls. He continued to the very last, whenever his strength would enable him to speak, to give suitable exhortations to those that were about him.

With regard to his own experience, in this last and languid feafon of his life, of which he frequently spake to those about him, he complained in general of great deadness of spiritual affections, and of the absence of all sensible impressions of joy and delight in the contemplation of the exceeding love of God towards him, and of his approaching happy change. As he difavowed in principle any dependence upon religious frames, as a recommendation to God's favour, thinking it a scheme which favours too much of felf-righteoufness, and had learnt to cast his whole confidence upon the promises of God freely offered, in the Gospel of Christ, to sinners convinced of their guilt and helpleffness; so he was quite contented and easy in his mind under the want of those sensations. But it is reasonable to suppose that the coldness and deadness of his affections were in a great measure, if not wholly, owing to the extreme weak state of his body. An inward burning fever, attended with profuse night sweats, had wasted his vital strength; a Aubborn cough continually hung upon him; neither his food nor his medicines did him any fervice; a general languor oppressed his whole frame, and his spirits were reduced to a very low state. At those times when the powers of nature failed him most, he was wont to break out into fuch expressions as these; What a miserable creature should I be in my present fituation, if I could not look upon God as my Covenant God, my reconciled Father in Christ? The weakness of my body and of my spirits deprives me of all joyous sensations; but my faith in God's promises, I bless the Lord, is firm and un-6 shaken. What though my loss of strength and spirits robs e me of all comfortable communion with God, the promises are not therefore made void. Abraham believed, and it was counted to him for righteoufnefs. I believe that God is faithful and true in all his declarations of mercy, which I have fought for, though I cannot now feel the impressions of his love.

Upon feveral occasions he was heard to fay, 'I bless God' that upon the closest review of my life, for these ten years 'past, I can see evident marks of my having lived with a single eye to the glory of God, in opposition to the selfishness of my nature.' And likewise,

· The

The nearer I advance towards eternity, the more I am confirmed in the truth of the Doctrines which I have preached and published. I am sure they will stand the test of the last day. Conviction of sin, original as well as actual, is the grand inlet to all saving knowledge; where this is wanting, the superstructure will not stand; but if this soundation be deeply laid, the heart will then welcome the glad tidings of salvation.

Upon the whole we may observe, that under a continued absence of all sensible comfort he possessed his soul in the most settled, abiding, solid peace, never admitting the least doubt

of his acceptance with God.

Nothing was more remarkable in him than the constant, even, and undisturbed tranquillity which he maintained under the frequent changes that attended his disorder. It sometimes happened that upon an alteration of his medicines there appeared hope of his recovery: at fuch times he was observed to take delight in the prospect of returning to the excercise of his miniftry among his people at Truro, of whom he never spake without evident tokens of fingular pleasure and satisfaction in them; fometimes not without tears of affection, and tender concern for the welfare of their fouls. When these short-lived hopes were vanished, and the dangerous symptoms of his disorder returned, no alteration appeared in the frame of his mind: he only turned his views to the awful scene that called for his more immediate attention, and spake with equal delight of the joys referved beyond the grave for the faithful fervants of the living God. It never could be discovered that he defired to live, or wished to die. His foul was all submission to the will of his heavenly Father, and his whole concern feemed to be, to preserve that temper of mind, wherein he might have faid with St. Paul, None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's.

His patience was not worn out, but strengthened and increased by the continuation and increase of his sufferings. If at any time, which seldom happened, an expression had escaped his lips, that seemed to savour of fretfulness or impatience, he was observed to check and reprove himself; at the last, indeed, patience appeared to have had her perfect work; for nothing of this kind was discovered in him for some time before his death.

What he endured within the last fix weeks from an inward parching heat, is almost inexpressible. His only apprehenfions under these trying circumstances were, lest his patience should not hold out, and that he should wish for a release fooner than God should see fit to grant it. But the Lord was pleased to preserve in him a spirit of resignation to the last.

To this view of his behaviour in this his last scene, I shall Subjoin two Letters, written by him to his nearest and most intimate Friend at Truro. The former is dated fifteen days,

the latter but five, before his death.

# · My dearest, most faithful Friend,

Y disorder, though by no means affording to myself the least prospect of recovery, yet seems to affect me at opresent more with weakness, than with that violent heat, which rendered me incapable of all thought. I can now, bleffed be God, think a little; and with what comfort do I both receive your thoughts, and communicate mine to you! O! my dear Friend, what do we owe to the Lord for one another! more than I could have conceived, had not God fent me-to die elsewhere. We shall have time to praise the Lord when we meet in the other world. I stand and look upon that bleffed world with an established heart: I see the way prepared, opened, and affured to me in Jesus Christ: and for ever bleffed be the name of God, that I can look e upon death, that introduces that glorious scene, without any kind of fear. I find my grand duty still is submission as to time and circumstances. Why should not I say to you, that I find nothing come so near my heart, as the fear lest my will should thwart God's in any circumstance; here I think I am enabled to watch and pray in some poor measure. Well, my dear Friend, I am but stepping a little before you. will foon also get your release, and there we shall triumph for ever in the name, and love, and power of the Lamb.— 6 Adieu; yours in the Lord Jesus Christ for ever. Amen. S. W. Blackheath, July 4. 1761.

My dearest Friend,

ITH great confusion of thought, I have no doubts, great confidence, great submission, no complaining. · The

The great thing, which I always feared, is, I believe, coming upon me; that I am coming into a diarrhœa, confined to my bed, and having no strength.

As to actual views of the joys that are coming, I have

onone; but a stedfast belief of them in Christ.

What I have found in myself for months, both as to the review of time past, and the present workings of the Spirit, has left me without all doubt of my union with Christ, &c.

Blackheath, July 14, 1761.

On the Tuesday morning he dictated the above Letter, for at that time he was not able to hold a pen in his hand. A few hours after the fymptoms of his approaching diffolution began to shew themselves, his throat rattled, a cold clammy sweat ran down his cheeks, and the muscles of his arms and face appeared to be convulfed with frequent spasms and contractions. His heart, to use his own expression, seemed to him to be tied round with thongs. He still spake of these presages of his death with the utmost calmness and composure, and begged of his Friends about him that they would pray for him, that he might hold out with patience unto the end. It being obferved by one of them fitting on his bedfide, what a bleffing he enjoyed in his prefent fituation, that his foul was ripe for heaven and eternity, he interrupted him with faying, 'That the body of fin was not yet done away, but that he should continue a finner to the last gasp, and defired that he would pray for him as fuch.' Thus lowly and humbly did he think of himself even under all his attainments in grace. In this lingering manner he continued the five or fix last days without any other visible alteration in his body than gradually growing weaker.

But notwithstanding all his former deadness and dryness of foul which he complained of, it pleased God to shed abroad in his heart a lively sense of his love and favour, and a strong foretaste of heavenly joy, before he took him to the enjoyment of himself. On the Thursday, starting up from an apparent sit of dozing, he took hold of his nurse by the hand, who was sitting near him, and uttered this rapturous expression; I have been upon the wings of the cherubim; heaven has in a manner been opened to me; I shall be soon there myself, and am only forry that I cannot take you with me. The next day, while a young Clergyman who came from a distant part of the

country to visit his departing Friend, was standing near his bedside, he lift up his eyes in a manner that bespoke a joy more than words could utter, and addressed him thus, 'O! my 'Friend, had I strength to speak, I could tell you such news, 'as would rejoice your very soul: I have had such views of

heaven-But I am not able to fay more.'

On the Saturday his voice faltered exceedingly, and his head feemed rather to ramble. We fearce imagined he could have lived out the day, and indeed had he not been a remarkably strong made man, it is not conceivable that he could have supported it so long under so severe and fatiguing an illness. He passed the night however in extreme weakness; and about nine o'clock the next morning, it pleased God to release him from

all his fufferings.

The evident concern of fome of his particular Friends upon the increase of his disorder, sometimes affected him; on which account, thinking, it is probable, that the sight of his last agonies might give them pain, he one day said to a servant that attended him, 'I would I might slip away, when nobody but 'you should be present;' and so indeed it fell out, for just when all except that person had left the room, not apprehending him to be so very near his end, he turned his head aside on the pillow, and nature appearing to be quite exhausted, without any other token than a sigh something longer and more deep than usual, his soul was delivered from the prison of the body.

He departed this life in a lodging-house at Blackheath, to which he had been removed a few weeks before, on Sunday July 19, 1761, in the forty-eighth year of his age, and entered

upon his fabbath of eternal rest.

It was his particular direction that his body should be interred in the Church-yard of the Parish in which he died. In compliance therewith he was buried in the Church-yard of Lewisham in the County of Kent.

From the foregoing account, the attentive Reader may draw

the two following reflections.

First, That a life of conformity to the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not what some, in excuse for their own coldness and negligence, represent it to be: they endeavour to persuade themselves and others that it is an impracticable plan, and inconsistent with many of the most reasonable and necessary em-

ployments.

ployments. If fuch perfons would fairly attend to the motions of their own minds, they would probably find, that the true ground of their objection is the fear of fingularity, the dread of being thought weak enough to be led away by the craft of men who lie in wait to deceive, not confidering that at the very same time they are manifestly enslaved to popular opinion, and want

the courage to think for themselves.

Secondly, That a life of conformity to Gospel principles is the pleasantest life that can be led upon earth: it would be difficult indeed to convey an exact idea of its peculiar joys and delights. to those who neither have nor defire to have any experience of them; but all who know what it is to love the Lord Fesus Christ in fincerity, know that our bleffed Master does not now leave his Disciples comfortless, nor require any service from them but what is itself the most perfect freedom. If true happiness confifts in folid tranquility and peace of mind, they only can enjoy it whose hearts and lives are unfeignedly devoted to God.-Great peace have they that love thy Law, faith the Pfalmist. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you, faith the Saviour : but alas ! there is no peace, faith my God, to the wicked. The proud, whom God refifteth, the covetous, whom God abhorreth, the envious, the uncharitable, the careless and self-confident, the unthankful and unholy, all in general that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Tefus Christ, will probably find, when the trying hour of diffolution comes, if they do not experience it already, that they are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dut: it was not so with him of whom we have been speaking, he was calm and undifturbed under various affecting trials, and when death approached, rejoiced in hope of the glory of God.

To conclude, if there be any among my readers who cruelly, diffainfully, and defpitefully speak against the righteous, who have wantonly or maliciously contributed to load with disgrace and contempt this or any other of the faithful Ministers or serious followers of the blessed Jesus; if there be any who, led away by the error of the wicked, take pleasure in deriding those that pass the time of their sojourning here in fear, and considering this world as a dangerous wilderness, that lies in their way to a land of rest and peace, wherein an everlasting inheritance is provided for them; let me intreat such persons to resect that a day is coming, when the understandings of men shall be freed from missace and misapprehension, and all things shall appear in their

true light. Then, to use the words of a pious Author, shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him. and made an account of his labours. When they se it they shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the strangeness of his salvation; so far beyond all that they looked for.—And they, repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit, shall say within themselves, This was he whom we had sometimes in derision and a proverb of reproach. We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour. How is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints? Therefore have we

erred from the away of truth, &c.\*

Bleffed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor flandeth in the way of finners, nor fitteth in the feat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night. + May this bleffing be the happy portion of all into whose hands these sheets may come! may the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who can work by the weakest and most unworthy of his servants, vouchsafe to make them instrumental to promote his glory and the good of immortal fouls! May every one that shall read the following Difcourses, be led into the knowledge and love of those enlivening truths, which animated our Author both in life and at death, and filled him with a well-grounded hope of everlasting salvation. May the law of God inwardly applied to his foul beget in him a deep conviction of fin, and lead him, as a schoolmaster, unto Christ the Saviour; that being justified by faith, he may have peace with God, bring forth fruit unto holiness, and in the end obtain everlasting life. Amen.

Oxford, June 15, 1763. J. S.

<sup>\*</sup> Wisdom of Solomon, v. 1, &c. † Psalm i. 1, 2.

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What is meant by Christ's being 'buried and descending into hell.' The believer is stedfastly persuaded that Christ was perfectly dead and rose again---that he submitted to the state of the dead in the discharge of his office as Mediator---That he overcame upon the cross him who had the power of death. The believer acknowledges the vanity of his present estate---and declares his endeavour to die unto sin ---and that it is his duty to prepare for his approaching state of separation.

#### SERMON XXII.

The resurrection of Christ, considered. It is a fact proved by incontestable evidence. The glorious benefits secured to the believer by his resurrection. It declares the justification of sinners by his death---And that he is Lord of all things ---And it declares the resurrection of all the members of his body. Believers acknowledge their obligation of conformity to his life---And that they have cause to triumph over the fears of death, in the belief of being risen with Christ.

#### SERMON XXIII.

Christ's ascension into heaven, considered. He ascended into heaven in a public character, as the representative of believers. By his ascension he opened the gate of everlasting life for his people---And also led captivity captive. By his 'ascension he received gifts for men.' The full meaning of these words, 'he ascended into heaven.' It is the believer's desire to have his conversation in heaven where Christ is. Did Jesus lead 'captivity captive,' it is the believer's duty to rejoice over all his vanquished spiritual enemies. Did Jesus 'receive gifts for men,' it should be my endeavour to use them to the purpose of their vouchsafement. We should pray that God may qualify those offering themselves to the ministry.

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#### SERMON XXIV.

\*\*Christ's sitting at the right hand of God the Father Almighty,' considered. It includes his being at the right hand of God, in the administration of his prophetical office.—And also in the exercise of his priestly office. Many are the benefits to believers from Christ's intercession. Jesus is on the right hand of God as King and as Lord of all. The believer desires to submit to his divine government and direction.

---And to depend on the protection of his government. We ought to examine ourselves, whether we have experienced the power of his offices on our hearts.

#### SERMON XXV.

'From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead,' that article considered. What is meant by the 'quick and the dead.' The believer declares his stedfast belief, that Jesus Christ, who was once crucified, shall come again to be the judge---And makes this profession with confidence, Christ being the Mediator between God and man. What works of love a believer may be said to have. What may be supposed to be a believer's humble declaration at the day of judgement. The believer's hope and waiting desire for that day---He expresses his purpose to be daily preparing for Christ's coming. An exhortation to prepare for the day of judgment.

#### SERMON XXVI.

GALATIANS iii. 24.--Wherefore the Law was our Schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by Faith.

This Epistle shews that justification is not by the works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ. What is meant by the Law. The great design of the Mosaic dispensation was to bring us to Christ. The ceremonial Law has ceased since the coming of Christ.—The moral still remains, and serves as a 'Schoolmaster to 'bring us to Christ.' The author's design to explain the Ten Commandments.—He begins with the first, 'Thou shalt have no other gods but me, or before me.' The four first Commandments require the inward worship of the heart, and the outward worship of the life.—The first requires us to know God. God's spiritual nature and perfections are revealed in his word. A serious inquiry whether we have a practical knowledge of God or not. We must condemn ourselves; and, as fallen men, may cry, 'God be merciful to us sinners.' This first commandment requires us to put our trust in God, to love him with all the heart, and fear him only. An inquiry whether we have trusted in God for things temporal—And also in respect of things spiritual.

#### SERMON XXVII.

What is implied in 'loving God with all the heart'---Have you esteemed God as your chief good, happiness, and portion?---Have you a most ardent desire after God?---Do you delight in God as your chief happiness? What reason we have to be humbled, and from a sense of our guilt, to betake ourselves to Christ for mercy.

#### SERMON XXVIII.

God, as our absolute Sovereign, the object of fear. Angels, saints, sinners, and devils, in what way God is the object of their fear. The fear of God exercised different ways. We are to have a deep concern for God's glory, and a godly sorrow for our sins. We are to justify God in the sentence he hath denounced against sin. We are to yield a quiet submission to God's corrections. We should be impressed with a due concern about his displeasure incurred by our sins. To consider whether we have been secure in our sins. Has our concern about God's displeasure for our sins, driven us to God's mercy through Jesus Christ. We are to have a concern for our past sins after we have betaken ourselves for mercy through the Redeemer. Have we such a fear of God as makes us jealous of his honour and fearful of his displeasure? Are we humbled for not having had a greater detestation of sin? Have we actually rejected all evil motions in our hearts? Hath the fear of God made us watchful against all temptations? Hath the fear of God kept us from dishonouring him in the use of his good creatures.

#### SERMON XXIX.

The first Commandment enjoins a practical knowledge of God, or giving the heart to him---This is the life and substance of all the Commandments. The second Commandment requires us to worship God. We are to worship God in the use of Prayer, the Word and Sacraments---Sincerity, diligence, faith and reverence necessary in worship. What engagements Baptism brings us under. What sincerity, diligence and reverence, have we shewn in observing our engagements. Have we been sensible of the ends of coming to the Lord's Supper?---Have we been sincerely desirous that Christ should be our Saviour?---Have we examined ourselves and come with an hungering appetite?--Have we come in faith to feed on a crucified Jesus?---Have we come with reverence and abasement as vile sinners?---An exhortation to humility and self-a basement on account of our miscarriages.

#### SERMON XXX.

An exhortation to bring our hearts and ways under examination by the Commandments. The Word and Prayer, as parts of worship, considered. Have we been sincere in the use of God's Word?---Have we been diligent in the use of the Word?---Have we used the scripture in faith?---Have we used God's word with reverence?----In respect of prayer, have we been sincere and diligent in prayer?----Ilave we approached to the throne of grace in faith and with reverence?----Our sins against the second Commandment, as those against the first, may tend to convince us of the need we have of a better righteousness than our own.

#### SERMON XXXI.

A yearly season for the more express humiliation and mourning for sin. How the Law is our Schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. A serious examination of ourselves for the year past. The third Commandment, considered. Have we not dishonoured

honoured God by our lips? Hath our conversation been such as tended to glorify God?---Hath there been nothing in our conduct dishonourable to God?---How have we conducted ourselves in our general and special callings. Our conduct in our general and special callings examined negatively and positively.

#### SERMON XXXII.

The fourth Commandment, Remember the Sabbath-day, considered. That day to be sanctified for God's glory and our spiritual profit. The design of the Sabbath, namely, divine worship and preparation for an everlasting rest. Resting from worldly employments required. Thou shalt do no manner of work. Have you rested from doing worldly business on the Lord's day?—Have your thoughts and words been heavenly?—No worldly business is to be done on the Sabbath-day. What works may be called works of Necessity and Mercy, and allowable on that day. When the Sabbath may be said to be kept holy. Public worship required on that day; namely, prayer, praise, hearing the word, and communicating—Private exercises; namely, secret prayer, examination, reading and meditation. Religious communication required, and speaking our own words forbidden. Hath your aim been principally to glorify God on that day? What is meant by the Sabbath being 'a sign between God and his people?' Hath your aim been the sanctification of your soul on that day? How great ground for self-condemnation and humiliation for not sanctifying the Sabbath.

#### SERMON XXXII!.

We are all guilty, and can only be accepted by God's mercy through Christ's righteousness. A confession suitable to every one of us. The law is to be explained in a spiritual sense. 'Honour thy father and thy mother,' these words explained. Of natural affection in parents and children. The duty of parents towards their children--Above all things their religious education is to be aimed at. Parents are to set their children a good example---And to instruct them in the knowledge of Christ. They are to instruct their children in all good ways. They are to be gentle towards their children. They are to correct them for stubbornness and idleness. Parents ought to place their children in a proper calling---And should make a suitable provision for them. Parents are to prevent their children from marrying graceless persons. They should be constant in prayer for their spiritual welfare.

#### SERMON XXXIV.

Of the duty of children towards their parents. There must be an acknowledgement of that dignity and authority God has put upon parents. They are to reverence their parents as appointed by God to direct their education. Children are to attend to their parents instructions—And to submit to their parents discipline—And to the corrections of their parents, and to profit by them. They must be humbled for their faults—And be grieved for having incurred their parents displea-

sure. Not to be angry with their parents for doing their duty. They must seek God's forgiveness, and that of their parents. They are cheerfully to submit to the disposals of their parents---And to their direction in all lawful things. Children are to honour their parents though they should not always act for the best.

#### SERMON XXXV.

The duty of servants considered—They are to consider themselves as servants of God in their calling. They are to have an inward reverence to their masters—And to shew an outward reverence towards them. They are to obey their masters in all things. Apprentices, how they ought to behave. Servants are 'not to 'purloin, but to shew all good fidelity.' They are to have 'clean hands,' and to be industrious and thrifty. They should pray for their masters, and the success of their business.

#### SERMON XXXVI.

The duties of masters to their servants considered. Religious masters should make a good choice of their servants. They are to serve God in the important calling of a Master of a Family. Masters are to use their authority over their servants for God's glory. The great influence a Master's conduct has over his Servants. Is his government such as best serves to promote religion among them?---Have Masters encouraged them in the ways of Christian godliness? Masters are to be mild in their carriage and reasonable in their commands---They are to be just and kind towards their Servants. It is the duty of Masters to watch over their Servants souls. Masters should examine themselves concerning the discharge of their duty, and, under a sense of their imperfections, to depend on the righteousness of Christ.

#### SERMON XXXVII.

The duties of Husbands and Wives, considered. Marriage is a divine institution. God's glory is set forth in preserving the chastity of our minds in the procreation of children, the end of marriage.—Both parties respectively commanded to answer these ends. A religious regard to these ends is for the glory of God. What rules God hath prescribed to married persons. Their duties represented by the spiritual marriage betwixt Christ and his church. They should regard each other as one, and endeavour to promote the eternal happiness of each other. They must help to bear each others burdens—And exercise patience and forbearance with one another. They must be faithful to one another. The temper and conduct of Christ to the church, sets forth what is the duty of the husband to the wife. Husbands should love their wives, and wives should reverence their husbands. It is the husband's duty to direct, and the wife's to obey. Husbands are to provide, and wives must prudently manage that provision. They must bear with their wives, and most tovingly help them. Reflections on bad ends in marriage, and proper directions given

### SERMON XXXVIII.

All the Commandments stand on the same footing of divine authority. The duties of ministers and people considered. Ministers should account themselves servants of Christ, and their people must reverence them as such. They must diligently dispense the word, and their people must meckly receive it. Ministers must give themselves up to their work, and people must communicate to them in all good things—They are to be examples of what they teach, and people must follow their good example. Ministers and people are to pray for each other. Beth to consider how they have discharged these duties, to mourn for defects, and to look for pardon through a Redeemer.

#### SERMON XXXIX.

The relation of Magistrates and People, to be considered, A mournful reflexion on want of conscience in Magistrates and People. Government is an ordinance of God. Magistrates must regard themselves as God's Ministers. Moses's direction concerning Magistrates. Magistrates are to be honoured and reverenced. Want of reverence for authority a national vice in this kingdom. Casting off regard to Governors is rejecting God's ordinance. The evil consequence of disregarding authority. Magistrates are to use their authority to maintain godliness, honesty and peace. Subjects are to obey Magistrates in all lawful commands. Magistrates must provide for the public necessities. The bad behaviour of Magistrates and Subjects to be lamented. They ought to pray for one another. The sins of the People against their Magistrates to be duly mourned for.

### SERMON XL.

Duties arising from various distinctions. In quality or station, some are high, others are low. The duty of Superiors and Inferiors in that respect. Another distinction made by wealth obliges to honour and reverence. Age makes a difference, to be regarded in the same manner. Natural gifts and acquisitions also make a difference. The wisdom of God appears in the various distinctions of mankind. The great evil of pride in Superiors. Spiritual attainments are to be honoured. Such persons should demean themselves with great humility. And they are to be useful and exemplary. How others are to behave to those blessed with the grace of God. Reflexions on the neglect of the duties of the fifth Commandment.

### SERMON XLI.

The sixth Commandment, Thou shalt do no Murder, considered. In every Commandment something required and something forbidden. Not to be of an envious disposition of heart---Nor to bear a revengeful temper, but to be of a meek spirit. We are to be of a kind and courteous temper. A peaceable temper is also a branch of meekness. We are not to be of a cruel, but of a compassionate disposition.

sition. We are not to gratify Envy, Revenge or Cruelty, in our speech. We are not to injure any in soul or body by our conduct. Drunkards, Gluttons, and Whoremongers, may be ranked among Murderers.

### SERMON XLII.

An Exhortation to be duly affected with our great guilt in breaking the Commandments. The seventh Commandment, thou shalt not commit Adultery, considered. Our bodies are to be kept in a due subjection to our spirits. The commandment requires inward chastity. What is implied by inward chastity. Intemperance forbidden by this Commandment. It is not only sinful, but nourishes lust. The sins of Sodom and Amnon, occasioned by idleness. All means to be used to restrain lust. Moderation in meats and drinks, and, as need is, fasting and abstinence. We are to be diligent in our calling. We are to be aware of the Recreations we use. The spirituality of this seventh Commandment to be seriously considered.

### SERMON XLIII,

The great sin and danger of transgressing the Law of God. The eighth Commandment, Thou shalt not Steal, explained. The great duty required is Contentedness, and the great sin forbidden is Covetousness. Covetousness includes an unbelieving distrust of God concerning those things we want for ourselves and families. And also a carnal desire lusting after the things we need not. Injustice is forbidden, a sin occasioned by Covetousness. There is often dishonesty in buying and selling, in borrowing and lending. Also in hiring, and labouring for hire.—If we have defrauded any, restitution is to be made. Niggardliness is a sin forbidden by the eighth Commandment. Eight marks of niggardliness. Wastefulness is a sin forbidden by this Commandment. He that wastes his substance in eating and drinking, or in unsuitable apparel, sins against this Commandment. Gamesters no better than Thieves, whether they lose or win. He that wastes his substance in pleasures, robs himself, his family, and the poor. Idleness is a companion that is the worst of Thieves. Niggardliness and wastefulness great temptations to dishonesty.

### SERMON XLIV.

Three directions for making a right use of the Law. The ninth Commandment, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour, considered. False-witnessing on oath is a breach of three Commandments. We are, as far as we can, to preserve a good opinion of our Neighbour in our hearts. The great evil of a censorious disposition. Rash-judging is a sin against this Commandment. A willingness to hear the faults of others, the effect of a censorious disposition. We are to maintain the character of our neighbour. Detraction, Slander and Evil-speaking the effects of censoriousness. What is to be understood by these effects of censure. The tongue appears to be an enemy to the soul. A new heart to be earnestly prayed for. We are not to speak of the faults of others unless obliged to it.

### SERMON XLV.

The tenth Commandment, Thou shalt not covet, considered. What is required by the Commandments of the first and second Tables. What is to be understood by Covetousness. This Commandment condemns the sinful desires of our nature. Earthly and sensual desires forbidden by this Commandment. The difference betwixt sinful and necessary desires. Ahab's desire after Naboth's vineyard, considered. What desires are forbidden by the tenth Commandment. We ought not to harbour sinful desires after our Neighbour's dignity. Nor to lust after his hurt in soul or body. We ought not to covet our Neighbour's Wife. Nor to covet our Neighbour's Goods. Nor should we envy our Neighbour's good name. This tenth Commandment shews the great sinfulness of our nature.

### SERMON XLVI.

The giving out of the Law implied that sin was in the world. And that sin is not known to be sin. It likewise implies that the consequences of sin are not regarded. And also the purpose of mercy through Jesus Christ. It likewise implies, that the partakers of this mercy may find in the Law a rule for their hearts and lives. We may learn from the Law our guilt and misery. The curse threatened against Adam lies against all his posterity. A summary of the Commandments given to set our guilt before us. The root of all our guilt lies in our sinful nature. The sense of our guilt and misery should bring us to Christ for mercy. After coming to Christ for deliverance from the curse of the Law, we are to walk in it all our life. An exhortation to beg grace to make a proper use of the Law, in three respects.

### SERMON XLVII.

MARK xvi. 15, 16.--- And he said unto them, Go ye unto all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.

After preaching the Law for the discovery of sin, and our fearful ruin thereby, we are to preach the Gospel, or glad tidings of salvation. The only way of deliverance is by Jesus Christ. Who Christ is, and what he has done. Christ's commission to his disciples explained. Christ's messengers are to offer the Gospel to sinners. Motives to accept of Christ and salvation by him---The first motive, is the consideration of the certainty of our ruin out of Christ, and of our salvation in him---The second motive, the greatness and certainty of our ruin if we slight the Gospel, and of our salvation if we close with it.

### SERMON XLVIII.

1 John ii. 8, 4.—And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

The design of this Epistle is to shew, that saving faith produces the fruits of obedience in heart and life. A right knowledge, or faith, is the only principle of true obedience. True obedience is the conformity of the whole man to the will of God. What is that knowledge of God which will produce such an obedience in the heart? This is not produced by the knowledge of God absolutely considered. Fears and doubts, perplexing the minds of serious persous, are occasioned by looking to God in an absolute manner, and not through a Redeemer---And in looking too much to God in an absolute manner, most believers find their progress in grace and holiness going on slowly. The knowledge of an absolute God brings discouragement and fear; but a Covenant-God through Jesus Christ the reverse. An absolute God does not give grace and strength; but a reconciled God in Christ doth. By a constant contemplation of God in Christ, and a dependence on the Spirit, we grow in a more perfect conformity to the commandments of God. We may learn to receive, with great gratitude, the message of mercy brought us by our incarnate God. An exhortation concerning the true manner of celebrating Christ's nativity.

#### SERMON XLIX.

The knowledge of God in Christ only constrains the heart to obedience. Obedience from the heart is an infallible proof of the truth of our faith and knowledge. Where this proof is not, there is not a knowledge of God. Reasons why a true knowledge of God in Christ produces obedience in the heart. Unfruitful knowledge is no knowledge at all. The reason why true believers are not more stedfast in their love and obedience. Obedience from the heart is a certain proof of our knowledge or faith. To say, we know God in Christ, and not to obey him, is a mere lie. An exhortation to acquaint ourselves with God in Christ, as revealed in the Gospel.

### SERMON L.

Romans i. 16.—I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

Shame hinders many from embracing the Gospel. When we may be said not to be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. We are not ashamed when we own Christ before men. When we live agreeably to the Gospel. When we endeavour to recommend it to the world. And when we are not ashamed of any, though ill liked by others, for living in conformity to the Gospel. First, It is the only means of salvation. Secondly, It is made effectual by the power of God to the salvation of those that believe. The reason of our being ashamed of the Gospel is, because we do not believe it to be the only means of Salvation. An exhortation stedfastly to believe the Gospel, and not to be ashamed of it.

### SERMON LI.

HEBREWS ii. 3 .- How shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation ?

An exhortation to the dving sons and daughters of Adam to think of this salvation. This Gospel salvation is great in every view. Its end is great, the manifestation of God's grace and love, and his other perfections. Its greatness appears from the subject of it, Man. Man's nature sunk into great depravity by his apostasy from God. This Salvation great in the means of it. The Covenant of Peace, ordered in all things and sure. The Three Persons in the Trinity engaged in this Salvation. The completeness and fulness of this Salvation. Infinite Justice and Holiness make no objection thereto. We all want this salvation, but are not sensible of the want of it. Nor labour to be acquainted with it, nor are we influenced by it. Those neglect this salvation, who do not practise what they know of it.—This salvation is neglected, if not valued above all things. The danger of neglecting this great salvation. How can we escape the curse of the Law if we neglect this salvation. The word escape sets forth our great danger. The words in the text import, that we shall for ever perish if we neglect this salvation. A serious exhortation not to neglect this great salvation.

### SERMON LIL.

Acts xxvi. 28.—Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

Agrippa's case, or that of an almost Christian, deplorable. When we may be said to be intirely persuaded to be Christians. The man's will is renewed, and he chooses God steadily and universally to serve and enjoy him. When we are but almost persuaded to be Christians, considered. He is not a true Christian who hath not given up his will and his heart to God. A person may be under great terrors of conscience and dread of God's wrath, and yet no Christian. He may attain a clear and distinct knowledge of Gospel-truths, and not be a true Christian. And may have great emotion in his affections about spiritual things. And this accompanied with an outward reformation. He may also be convinced of the beauty of holiness and excellency of Godliness, and not be a true Christian. When a man's will is not persuaded steadily to embrace the Gospel, he is not a true Christian. What hinders almost Christians to be so altogether, considered. Agrippa's case and that of others of his character, considered. The love of sin or some worldly lust hinders men from being true Christians. An exhortation to give the heart to God, without which there can be no real Christianity.



# SERMON I.

## LECTURES ON THE CHURCH CATECHISM.

## Acrs xvi. 30.

### What must I do to be saved?

THE importance of the inquiry fuggested in these words is undeniable. The person that spoke them was the Jailer, who, being duly affected with the miraculous power and presence of God, (which shook the foundations of the prison in which Paul and Silas were confined) was brought to a deep concern about the condition of his foul, which drew from him this importunate question, What must I do to be faved? It would be absurd to imagine the inquiry does not as well become us as him. It were well if every foul of us were brought to make it with his earnestness and purpose of heart. But however that be, to give a full answer to it will not be amiss. It may, by the bleffing of God, beget that concern upon the hearts of those who continue insensible in their fins, which their unhappy case most loudly calls for; while at the same time it will direct those who are feeking eternal life into a more perfect knowledge of the way of fal-

My defign is to attempt the resolution of this interesting matter, in an Explication of our Church Catechism, during the Sunday Afternoons of this Summer\*. And I am confident, if due attendance and attention be given hereto, none of you will think the matters contained in this little Summary to have been so easy to be understood as not to need thought and explanation, nor of so small importance as not to deferve it.

It will be proper to introduce the explanation intended by this general remark on the defign of the Catechism; which, properly conceived, will ferve as a key to open to us what is contained in it; namely, "That this Catechism does, as all " other Christian Catechisms must do, relate intirely to the " religion of fallen lost man." The matter this Catechism explains, is not what as gracious perfons we must do to keep God's favour, but what as finners must be done in us and by us to obtain it: not fimply what, as in a state of integrity. we must do to be happy, but what, as in a state of ruin, we must do to be faved. If you think it contains an account of the Religion of Works, you are altogether beside the matter, cannot understand one syllable it says, and however you may have a certain kind of knowledge respecting the Christian Doctrines herein set before you, yet you have still all to learn, as to the falvation of your foul in the belief of them. I befeech you, therefore, beware you do not stumble at the threshold. and, by imagining you must be saved by your own doings, overset the Covenant of Grace, (which is no longer such, if our merits are fet up as the cause of our acceptance with God) and fo render the Redemption that is in Christ quite a needless thing; and what may not be at first thought of, not only Faith, but also Repentance, the Sacraments, and in short, all means of Grace, absolutely impertinent. The Catechism fupposes you to be an apostate creature, and, as such, undone and helplefs, incapable of yourfelf of recovering God's fayour, or of returning to him. It proceeds intirely on this supposition, that you are in a fallen state, explaining to you the method which the mercy of God hath provided for your remedy, how you are called to it, and by what means you may be made effectually a partaker of it. Now this being laid down, I proceed to observe from it, for the better understanding of the Church Catechism;

I. That

<sup>\*</sup> These Sermons were preached at Truro in Cornwall, in the year 1759.

I. That it is a fummary of that whole falvation for fallen creatures, which is in the Redeemer Jesus Christ Every part of it has the most direct eye to Him, as the All in All of lost fallen man. The baptismal Covenant is entirely founded in his merits; the baptifmal Renunciation stands upon his kingdom and grace; the Christian Faith points him out as the Author of all our pardon, acceptance, and fellowship with God in time and eternity; the Law in the Ten Commandments fets him before us as our righteousness and the procurer of that Grace, by which we are restored to that image of God, and conformity to his bleffed nature and will. which is the substance of the Law; Prayer, finally, and the Sacraments, which are the means of our access unto God as our Father, and of our receiving from him the full affurance of his love and favour, with all needful supplies of his Spirit; these are no otherwise acceptable to God, or profitable to us. but in the Faith of Jesus Christ, and through his mediation. Christ then is the sum of this Catechism, even Christ of God made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption. Wretched Expositors therefore of this Catechism are they, who, by passing over lightly the Fall of man, by failing to explain the deep apostasy of our nature, and therein our absolute guilt and insufficiency to all good, (artfully, wickedly, and with the most barefaced disingenuity, either faying nothing about them at all, or what only might ferve to make people think these were points of uncertainty, and of no moment) have knowingly and wilfully overturned the defign which the Reformers had in the Catechifm; hid from mens eyes those doctrines which the true Church of England thinks to be effentially necessary to salvation; and effectually ftruck Christ out of the whole of it, as to his being the Rightoufness and Strength, the now living Head and the future glorious Reward of his people.

II. I take notice farther, for the better knowledge of what is to be expected in the Catechifm, that it not only goes upon the fupposition of our being fallen, lost, helpless creatures, and of redemption wrought out by Jesus Christ, as the only means of recovery; but, supposing also that we own the one and the other, it does only explain how it is that we lost creatures are called to this salvation, and upon what condition it is made effectually ours. It supposes you to be in a lost state

hy nature, explains to you what that loft state is, and taking it for granted you would be glad to be delivered out of it, and that there is but one way whereby you can be fo, namely, by Jefus Christ, opens to you very fully what that falvation is. and what, as a Christian, lies on your part, that you may have the whole benefit of it. You are not therefore to look here for any proofs of your "being by nature born in fin, and a child of wrath;" it tells you, upon God's authority, that you are so, and supposes you fensible of it; nor does it go about to convince you by arguments, that there is no other name under heaven whereby you must be saved, but only the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; that, as an instruction provided in the visible church professing the name of Christ, it sets forth as a truth not to be questioned. It is simply an instruction for lost finners in the way of falvation that is in Jesus Christ; and whoever doth not know himself a fallen lost creature. and defire falvation by Christ Jesus only, can get no faving good from it.-I observe farther, for the better understanding the scope of the Catechism;

III. That it fets forth faith as the means of our being made effectually partakers of the falvation that is in Christ, namely, that true faith, which engages to a renunciation and forfaking of all the ways of fin, and is a principle of obedience to God's holy will and commandments, and actually enables to the one and the other of these by the grace of God, waited for, and given in the use of prayer and the sacraments. And farther, that it also sets out baptism as the first sealing ordinance, confirming all the promises of God unto us upon such our faith, and giving us what may perhaps be called a Charter-title, which will have obligatory force when we do so believe, and in the mean time calls upon us to do fo. This is the fubstance of the Church Catechism, and may shew you the general plan upon which it is drawn up, namely, that fince we are fallen and lost creatures, and God has prepared falvation for us in Tefus Christ, the only way that we can have that salvation effectually ours, is by a true faith begotten in us by the Holy Spirit, powerful to the mortification of fin, and enabling us to live unto God. This is the Christian Covenant sealed by baptism, and this view of it accounts for the several parts of

the Church Catechism; namely,

1. The union of true believers with Christ, and therein their

their adoption to be God's children in this life, and title to an

inheritance in the kingdom of heaven hereafter.

2. The baptismal vow, which is a folemn profession of faith in God through Jesus Christ, wrought by the operation of the Holy Ghost; of their renouncing the devil, the world, and the slesh; and of their obligation and purpose to keep God's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of their life.

3. Prayer and the facraments; the former, for confirming this faith in us; the latter, for affuring to us the promifes of God in Christ upon such our faith, as also for building us up therein. In these three things lies the whole substance of the Catechism: whereby you see that the merit of Christ is the cause of all hope towards and acceptance with God; and faith in him the only way or means of our being made partakers thereof.

Having now afcertained the scheme upon which the Catechism of the Church of England is planned, I come to speak of the first Part of it above mentioned, The privileges sealed to believers in Baptism; namely, they are therein made, in a covenant way, " members of Christ, children of God, and "inheritors of the kingdom of heaven." These privileges are fealed to believers in baptism. And if only to believers, how then are they faid to belong to infants who are incapable of faith, while nevertheless children are taught to fay, that in their baptism they were made members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven? We allow the baptifing of infants, because we judge we have cod's warrant and command for it; and inafmuch as the children of parents professing themselves Christians, are relatively and federally a holy feed, (the promise evidently and expressly reaching unto them as well as their parents) inafmuch as by baptism they are made members of the visible church, and have a right to all the external privileges of the church equally with any others; and inafmuch as also when they are brought to baptism, they do make profession of the true faith by their proxies; therefore here, as well as in the office for baptifing infants, they are spoken of, in common with all others who have partaken of baptism, as believers and regenerate, and confequently as having a fealed right in all the bleffings of the Covenant of Grace: I say, for these reasons they are spoken

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of as true believers and regenerate persons; not that they actually are fo, or indeed can be, till the gift of God, namely, faith, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, through the hearing of the word, shall be granted unto them; when (and not before, though baptifed) they are effectually made living members of Christ, children of God, and heirs of heaven; and when their baptism comes to have its full force, sealing and confirming to them all the bleffings of the gospel as theirs in the most absolute and complete manner. Yet in the mean time, fince infants, children of Christian parents, have by birth a title to christian privileges, so far forth as their case requires, and fince by their baptism they are admitted into the number of God's professing people; therefore, though by their baptism they may not be said to have these privileges, in a covenant way, fealed to them as theirs in the proper power and influence of that initiating feal; yet thereby they have what, for distinction fake, I may be allowed to call a Charter title to them; their name is by baptism put into the charter-grant of christian privileges, which they may plead, as fully engaging a gracious and faithful God to them, whenever they attain unto true faith. Now fuch their charterright to the great bleffings of being made, in this way, by baptism, members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, they are here put in mind of; and that with this design, that being sensible of the greatness of these bleffings, and of the right they have in them, if they make use of it, they may be immediately stirred up to do so. And in order to their being moved hereunto as they grow in years, it is first the duty of parents, sponsors, and ministers, to explain to them, and fecondly, of the young persons themfelves, to consider the importance of these gospel bleffings, and the right they have in them, to the end, that by a true faith, fruitful of gospel holiness, they may be brought, by the grace of God, to make out their claim to them as good and effectual.

First, It is the duty of parents, sponsors, and ministers, to explain unto children, as they become capable of understanding them, the great importance of these gospel privileges, and the right they have in them; in order to move them into the making out their claim and right by true faith and repentance. It is a justice we owe to Christ, to our little ones, to our own souls.

fouls, that we should take every measure for instructing them in, and for recommending to them the excellency of these blessings. The incomparable value we set upon them ourselves, evident before our children in the influence they have on our whole conduct, should teach them; and our carefulness in taking every opportunity of opening to them the sense and force of these riches of Christ, should be perpetually exciting them to make their interest in them fure. Whether parents, fureties, or ministers, (and indeed the fame may be faid of the whole church) we should be by conduct and instruction explaining and recommending to them what a glorious thing it is to be a member of Christ, joined to the Son of God the Saviour, the only Saviour of the world, in whom there is all that we can want or wish, all the treafures of pardon, grace, and glory; a child of God, no longer a child of wrath; an outcast from the divine favour, an object of God's displeasure, but a child of the high and living God, a child whom he loves with that infinite tenderness which is peculiar to himfelf; a child whom he does and will care for; whom he loves to keep in his everlasting arms, and delights to have continually in his fight; an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven; a child, and therefore an heir, no longer an heir of hell, as once when he was not in Christ, but now an heir of the everlafting kingdom of heaven; an heir, growing up to the possession of his inheritance every day; an heir, who shall shortly be in his Father's house and family, past death; past sin, past sorrow, happy, blessed, glorious for ever and ever. I fay, it is our duty to explain and recommend these glorious things to our little ones, and by all posfible means to stir them up unto the fuing for that faith, by means of which, great as these bleffings are, they shall be made effectually theirs.

Secondly, It is the duty of all young persons, who are called to these important blessings, seriously to lay them to heart, as they become capable of doing so; and continually to pray unto God to give them grace, that by a true faith, their title in them may be made good and effectual. Dear children, I beseech you, endeavour to be sensible yourselves how great these blessings are, and how much you need them. Do not you know that you are by nature born in sin and children of wrath? Can you think any thing in the whole world so terri-

ble as that natural state of yours? And will ye be willing to continue in it? What, are ye willing that God shall be angry with you all the while ye live, and, when you die. cast you into the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone? God forbid this should be your case. No. There are better things prepared for you. God has fent his only begotten Son from heaven to fave you from this state of sin and wrath. And God hath called you to partake of this falvation, and given you, as it were under his hand, a right to it, if ye use that right. And will ye not use it? O, my dear children, what a bleffed thing will it be for you to have Christ for your Christ! O, if ye once have but Christ for your Christ, ye need fear nothing. Only get Christ, and ye will fear nothing.-Ye will not fear the devil, though he be the roaring lion, that walketh about feeking to devour you. Ye will not fear death, which every body else is afraid of. And then, ye will not fear thunder nor lightning, nor any other thing ye are now so much afraid of. No; if ye have Christ once, ye will fear nothing: for then God will be your Father. And you know God is able to do for you, for he made every thing. -And if he be your Father, then to be fure he loves you, yes, 2 great deal more than your own father and mother, and he will do every thing for you, and will not fuffer you to be hurt by any thing. And do not you know that God never dies, tho you do? He will be alive when you are dead; and, if you belong to Christ, he will give you a far better world than this is; pleasures a great deal better than any you can have here; and every thing better without comparison. Why, heaven will be yours. O, I am thinking, how happy ye will be when ye get to heaven. There ye will be like the angels of God; there ye will be glorified faints; there will ye fland at the right hand of God (and who then shall be able to hurt you?) There we will be finging praifes to God with thousands of thousands of faints and angels; there ye will not die any more, nor be fick any more, nor be afraid of any thing any more. And how long will ye be there? Not for a little while, but for ever. O how happy will ye be when ye get to heaven! Now therefore think of these things, my dear children. Do not let the love of play and pleasure make you forget them. Christ is far better for you than all the pleasure

and all the play, nay, than all the fine clothes, and all the fine fights, and all the fine things in the world together.

Think of these things, and be sure you pray to God every day to make you mind them, and make you love them. The devil wants to have you, and he will be trying all he can to make you forget them; but God is stronger than the devil; and if you pray unto him, he will make you remember them, and will put them into your hearts, and will by his holy Spirit make you, who are by nature born in sin and the children of wrath, members of hrist, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.

## SERMON II.

## Acrs xvi. 30.

## What must I do to be saved?

N and by baptism believers have sealed to them a covenant-right in the glorious privileges of membership in Christ, adoption into God's family as children, and inheritance in the kingdom of heaven. And baptism, which does thus, in a covenant way, seal these privileges to believers, does, in what is called a charter-way, seal them to baptised infants, so that it lies upon themselves, coming to years, to make out their claim to these things, by a true saith wrought in them by the Spirit of God. Accordingly the Question immediately following is, "What did your godfathers and god-" mothers then for you?" that is, in your name, as represent-

ing you, and acting for you.

Answer. "They did promise and vow three things in my mame. First, That I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the sless. That I should bestieve all the articles of the Christian faith. And, Thirdly, That I should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life." All this, (which in sewer words is but truly to believe, to wit, by that divine faith, in the power of which we die unto sin and live unto God) they promised and vowed, not as what I was then to do, for I was at that time incapable, but what I should bereafter do when I grew up to years of discretion, and live in the practice of all my days. And I am perfectly satisfied, that, if I do this, I am indeed a member of Christ, a child of God, and

an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, my baptism, in that case, being God's seal of indenture, as it were, and obligation, whereby he conveys and makes over to me, in full right, all these blessings, engaging himself, by contract and covenant thus fealed and executed, to make them good to me.-But I know also, that, if I do not this which they promised and vowed for me, and until I do it, these blessings are not mine; neither had my baptism at the time, simply and of itfelf, force effectually to make and feal me member of Christ, child of God, and inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. So that I fee my having a real right in thefe things, and my being able to look upon them as mine, in virtue of my baptism conveying and fealing them to me, doth depend upon my believing and doing this which my godfathers and godmothers promised for me. The Question therefore coming next after is. " Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe and " to do what thy godfathers and godmothers promifed for "thee" The Answer to which is; "Yes verily, and by "God's help, fo I will. And I heartily thank our heavenly "Father, that he hath called me to this state of salvation, " through Jefus Christ our Saviour. And I pray unto God " to give me his grace that I may continue in the same unto " my life's end." Having proceeded thus far in the recital of the Catechism, it may be advisable to speak to this latter question and answer here, both that we may have before us a general account of what we are to expect in the baptismal vow, as well as that, in the particular explanation thereof, the Cree: and Commandments may appear the more clearly to be but parts of it, being proceeded to without interruption immediately after that the renunciation of the devil, world, and flesh, shall have been opened; and also, that the obligation to baptismal engagements (being considered immediately after baptismal benefits, and seen as absolutely necessary to be performed, in order to a real and faving right in such bleffings) may be stated in its full force, and be brought with its proper power upon the mind.

Now in the Question and Answer before us, I observe,

I. That the person questioned is supposed to be instructed in the nature of gospel blessings, and his own want of them: for he speaks of a state of salvation through Jesus Christ the Saviour; and expresses his hearty thankfulness, that he him-

felf is called to it. Neither of which he could properly do, unlefs he knew what a finful, guilty, undone, helplefs creature he is by nature; and that in Jesus Christ there is a free and full salvation provided for him, reaching to his every need in this life and the future.

II. I observe also, that the party questioned is supposed to be instructed in, and acquainted with the nature and meaning of the baptismal vow, as corresponding to that falvation. He is supposed to know this; that he is not called upon to believe, and do the things contained in the baptismal vow, only because God will have him so to believe and do, but also from the very nature of his fallen state: because being by nature in a state of sin and death, as guilty and helpless, he must needs, if he will be faved, believe in God through Jesus Christ, seeing there is no other way but this of Christ wherein God is merciful to guilty finners; and God, for his own glory, has provided this way for their pardon and acceptance to his favour; and because also being by nature under the dominion of fin, and estranged from God, in a miserable subjection to the devil, his liberty lies entirely in his renouncing the one, and turning to the other, through the grace offered him. And that he is here supposed to be instructed in and acquainted with. This is plain likewise, from his thanking God that he hath called him to this flate of falvation, and by his praying God to give him grace that he may continue in the fame, believing and doing what his godfathers and godmothers promifed for him; which practice of faith and obedience is indeed being in a state of falvation in the very nature of the thing itself, as it is a present enjoyment of the salvation that is in Christ, in an actual freedom from the guilt and power of fin. - I observe,

III. That in this Question and Answer the person questioned is farther supposed to be instructed in, and acquainted with the nature of baptism, as an instrument, by divine appointment, sealing all the blessings of this salvation to those who thus believe and do, and to those only, though baptised.—
He sees the blessing on one part, and the obligation on the other both inclosed and sealed up together in the baptismal ordinance. He is satisfied, that as baptism seals Christ and all his benefits, so only to true believers; and therefore, where the condition is not wrought in the heart, and manifest in the

life,

life, there baptism has not its sealing force and power. Yet he is advised, that baptism does convey and assure Christ and all his benefits to all those who do believe with that faith which worketh obedience; such faith and obedience being, as it were, the present possession of salvation: and accordingly he heartily thanks God for having called him by his word and Spirit to this true faith, and thereby to a state of salvation, in which he regards and walks with God as his God in covenant, by virtue of baptism, and prays that he may have grace to continue in this state of salvation, living by faith, unto his life's end.

In these things the person questioned is here supposed to be instructed, as he is also supposed with full purpose of heart to acquiesce in them. Concerning which acquiescence of his, he here makes the fullest and most peremptory declaration, faying, "I do verily think myself bound to believe and "do those things which my godfathers and godmothers pro-" miled for me;" 'not only because in my name, as my representatives, they promised for my so doing and believing, but because I see and know my whole salvation depends hereon; and because I cordially approve, and fincerely va-· lue this falvation, in the whole of it, as most worthy of and honourable to God and to Jefus Christ my Saviour, as well as being complete in its effects to myself. And although I fee and foresee that a constant succession of self-denials, reproaches and fufferings, must be my lot in this state of · Christian salvation I am called to, yet I am stedfastly determined, by the help of God, thus to believe and do, as my bounden duty is. Yea, and I am fo far from being discouraged at the thought of what I have already, or may hereafter be obliged to forego, lofe, or suffer in this state of falvation, that I heartily thank God for having called me (first in my baptism, when I was an infant, wherein he graciousby took me into the number of his people, and fince by his word and Spirit begetting faith in me, and fo making my baptism of full force) to this state of salvation wherein I fland: for fuch mercy of our heavenly Father toward me I am abundantly, above all things, and in every cafe thankful. And there is but one thing that I have henceforward to ' ask especially at his hands, which is, that God will give me grace, that, by no treachery of my own heart, device of the

devil, or frowns or smiles from the world, I may be moved; but that always, every where, and in every thing, I may be kept continuing in the faith and practice of a Christian, without wavering and without drawing back, unto my life's end.'

The fense of the passage is now fully before us; and we may each of us seasonably make some inquiries into ourselves concerning it. For the matter before us is not the business of children, but that which we must be all found, not only in the profession, but also in the practice of, as we hope to meet Christ with any courage or comfort at his second coming to judge the quick and the dead. Permit me therefore to ask every person in this assembly, now grown up to years of dis-

cretion,

Fir/t, Whether you think yourfelf bound to believe and do what is contained in the baptismal vow? Do you think your believing in Jefus Christ, renouncing sin the world, and the devil, and walking after God's will and commandments, to be the very business of your life? And that you are really and actually bound to fuch a conduct by your baptismal profession? It is true indeed these engagements were made for you when you knew nothing of the matter: but the question is, now, that you have your reason about you, do you think yourself obliged to stand by your Christian profession, and that declaration made thereof in baptism, or not? If you say, "No; "what concern have I with engagements made without my "confent? I do not think myself bound to these things:" Then you will take notice, that you do in fact disclaim your baptism, and, in consequence, renounce Christianity, and all hope of falvation through Jesus Christ. You put yourself quite off the gospel foundation, and determine to stand on your own bottom for everlafting life. But then, if these be your thoughts, how very inconfistent a part have you been acting, and how have you been trifling with God, as often as you have come into a Christian assembly, or approached unto the Lord's table? Since both the one and the other of these are, in the very nature of them, public acknowledgements of your judging and believing there is falvation in none other but Jesus Christ, and of your thinking yourselves obliged to die unto sin and live unto God, after the example of Christ's death and resurrection, and according to the rule of

God's holy word. But if you judge yourself bound to believe and to do these things contained in the baptismal vow, I ask,

Secondly, Have you a stedfast will to do so? Can you fav. from the bottom of your heart, as in the presence of Him who knows your fecret thoughts, and as you hope to be faved. -"I will do fo by God's help. I have no objection to any "thing here required of me to believe, renounce, or perform; it is my honest desire, God knows, to fulfil it all; and al-"though I have no fufficiency of myself to perform the least " part of it, vet I am resolutely determined upon performing "the whole in the stated course of my life, by God's help?" Now let us beware, my dear brother, that while we are faying this, we have at the bottom no referves. If you do not give God absolutely all, you give him nothing. Are you therefore fully and wholly determined upon a life of faith in God, as your present and eternal all through Jesus Christ, to be justified, accepted, and glorified, only in his own gospel way. through the righteourners and death of Jesus Christ? Are you determined to renounce the dominion which the devil, the world, and the flesh, naturally have over you? to forsake every known fin, in a defire that no fin may be hid from you, and to oppose all the suggestions of the flesh, temptations of the world, and devices of the devil that would draw you into fin? And are you determined also to make conformity to God's will and commandments the great end you will aim at in all your conduct, fearching what that will of the Lord is, labouring to bring yourfelf to it, and never allowing yourfelf to dispense with the performance of any the least part of it on any confideration? Now, what fay you? Is it still your language, "By God's help, fo I will?" What, does nobody among us find any drawing back in his heart? What, is there no crying from within, "It is too much; thefe are hard fay-"ings? Must it be all this? Will nothing less satisfy?"-Why, firs, you fee it is all this, and not a jot lefs. And if you have not a will to it all, you are as yet no believer, no Christian; neither have you any part in the gospel salvation. Your heart is unchanged, you are still a natural man, whatever be the outward regular form of your life; and you have still all to learn, as to the eternal welfare of your foul; for you see plainly your will is still in a state of enmity and oppofition to the will of God. But if you fay, I have a will to all

these things, I would defire you, for preventing all mistakes,

to inquire farther;

Thirdly, Whether you are determined thus to believe and do by a constant faithful recourse to the help of God For your diligence in feeking that help, without which you own you cannot do any of these things, will be your best proof that you have really given unto you a will to do them. If you fay, I am determined to believe and do as a Christian ought, and yet do not feek the help of God to give you power for the work; do not pray, do not read, do not communicate, do not meditate, where can be your good-will to your Christian duty? It is not a warm and hafty resolution, that proves you have a heart fixed and determined herein, but a steady deliberate choice, producing an unwearied diligence in the use of all the means of your obtaining that grace without which you can perform none of these things: yet neither is it a formal customary attendance upon and going over all these means, that will argue the determination of heart that is in question; but an attendance upon them in a fincere, earnest, express defire of obtaining grace to grow in faith, to overcome fin, and to ferve God. If you have really thus a will to the work, and are perseveringly seeking God's help for the power; if, whenever you come short or fall, you still continue calling upon God to give you more grace, and are never beat out of your feeking it by any discouragements, you are the Christian; and however great your imperfections, and manifold your failures, still be affured that Christ lives in you, and you in him; for no less than that is the very truth of your case.

What has been now submitted to inquiry very properly affords ground for an address to all who are here present. And,

First, To those who are young, and as yet but growing up to years of discretion. What I have to say to them on the occasion is, that until they understand what their godfathers and godmothers promised for them, really perceive themselves bound to believe and do what was so promised in their name, and find themselves moved and stirred up in their hearts to be sincerely willing hereunto, and are actually calling upon God to give them grace for the performance of it, they ought not to come to Consirmation; because they therein declare, that having weighed these things, and carefully examined into their own hearts, they find themselves determined to perform

them by the help of God. It were to be wished, that this excellent institution were administered with more frequency, and attended upon with more reverence, to the end that young perfons might be led to more ferious impressions of the importance there is in publicly declaring themselves content with, and determined to practife their baptismal vow. But how abfurd is it, that very children should be admitted to a Confirmation, as if the imposition of hands were a kind of charm that should do them good, when themselves knew neither the why nor the wherefore of the transaction? And if young persons should not come to confirmation, till they have both underflanding of the baptismal vow, and also good will to the performance of it, how much less should they be encouraged to come to the Lord's Table under fuch disqualification, to gratify the formality of others, and to their own exceeding hurt and hindrance! But,

Secondly, What has been now brought into inquiry may be very properly addressed to those whose consciences have testified against them, that they have not a will to believe and do what, as Christians, is bound upon them. My dear friends, I cannot be so insensible to your condition, as not to beseech you to confider how miferable that condition is. If ye had not been born in a Christian country, if ye had not been baptised in the name of Christ, if ye had never heard the word of God, your cafe had not been so bad as it now is. But all these advantages ye have enjoyed in vain. In vain? alas! worse than in vain; to the vast increase of your guilt. For ye cannot but think in your own minds, that it shall be more tolerable for the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for you! Ye have heard the Master's will, but have not done it; your stripes therefore shall be the more. Take this thought home with you. "Surely there is no fal-" vation but in Christ; I see not any shadow of hope but in "him; yet in him I am not; for I believe not, nor do as he " hath commanded. Should death come upon me as I now "am, could I be fafe? Would not my case be wretched for " ever? It must be otherwise with me than it has been. But "when? Hereafter? But why not now, as well? now, that "the word and Spirit call me? Ah, that I could fay, by God's " help I will be a Christian indeed! How easy would my " mind then be! It must be done. Up, my soul, for death No. I.

"flands at the door; and thou art undone if it find thee thus; "undone without remedy for ever and ever." O what a thought is it, that there are so many among us who will not

do what their fureties promifed for them!

Lastly, To those who have had a comfortable answer upon the inquiry, know their Master's will, have a will to do it, and are diligently feeking grace to enable them to the performance; I would observe, that it is their duty to be "heartily "thankful to their heavenly Father, that he hath called them 66 to this state of falvation through Jesus Christ;" to bear upon their hearts the liveliest and most abiding sense of his goodness towards them therein; and to shew forth their gratitude by a life of patience, perseverance, and praise. It is their duty also to pray always unto God, that he will give them grace to continue in well doing unto their lives end, never weary, and never discouraged; adding grace unto grace; growing in the inner man, and getting more above the devil, world, and flesh, that they may be more serviceable to God in their generation, and may wait with more longing defire for their inheritance in the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

# SERMON III.

## Acts xvi. 30:

### What must I do to be saved?

HE motives and obligations to keep and walk in the practice of the baptismal vow having been sufficiently set forth, we are now to proceed unto the explanation of the vow itself. It consists of three parts;

First, A renunciation of the devil, the world, and the

flesh.

Secondly, A belief of all the articles of the Christian Faith. Thirdly, Keeping God's holy will and commandments, and

walking in the fame all the days of your life.

Concerning these three particulars, it will be proper now, before we enter on a special examination of them, to observe in general, what has been before touched upon, the necessity of fuch renunciation, faith, and obedience. And this lies purely in the condition of our fallen nature, which, like that of the fallen angels, is a state of atheism as to the practice of any faith in God, love towards him, reverence of him, trust in him, defire to please him; in short, as to any happines refulting from the knowledge of his infinite and eternal excellencies, his nearness to us, and our relation and dependence upon him. The reason why by nature we are thus without God in the world is, because in our fallen state there is a principle in us called fin or the flesh, under the influence of which (while in that state) we think, act, and live independent of God, feeking all our fufficiencies from the creature instead of the Creator, having all our ends and aims centering in ourselves, not in him. Now this being the state of man by na-

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ture, is plainly a state of alienation from God, and rebellion against him; and as such, a state of misery: for being a state of alienation, it has evidently cut us off from all possibility of happiness, which can only be had in God; and being a state of rebellion, has exposed us to his almighty wrath and indig-Left in this state, our ruin is as certain as that of the fallen angels; yet to deliver ourselves out of it we have neither will nor power. We cannot divest ourselves of our nature, and while that remains we shall always fet up felf, and reject God for happiness; or if we could return to submission, how could we heal the breach made by our apostasy, and avert divine indignation? Now to heal this breach, to fatisfy God's injured honour, and to bring man back to his proper place of dependency; by the former, to open a way to man's happiness in God, by the latter, to bring him into the enjoyment of it; this is the business of the Son of God in the character of Mediator. The falvation thus wanted, and thus provided, the person here speaking does solemnly declare his unseigned acceptance of, in the words of the baptifual profession, wherein, upon a previous acquaintance with the finfulness and misery of his fallen state, and with the falvation that is in Jesus Christ, he thus publicly declares himself. "I abhor and detest the "dominion which the devil, the world, and the flesh have na-"turally over me, and under which I lived, till Christ came " to me by his word and Spirit, shewed me my misery in that " fad condition, offered me mercy, and gave me deliverance " from this accurfed flavery. And now that I am fet at li-" berty, I do, as my sponsors in my baptism promised I should, "most avowedly renounce, to the glory of God and the com-"fort of his church, the fervice of all these mine enemies; "fully determined, by the grace of God, never more to yield " myfelf unto them; but continually to oppose them, reject-" ing steadily all their folicitations, and taking every measure " for lessening the influence I do or may find they have over " me.-And, in the renunciation of these, I do, as it was "promised I should farther do, avouch my cordial and thank-" ful acceptance of the covenant of grace, fincerely believing "in, and humbly relying upon that way of falvation that is in " Christ Jesus my Saviour, wherein reverently and confidently "I lay hold of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoft, as my " reconciled God; whom I defire henceforward to regard as "my Father in the merits of Jesus Christ, with whom I wish to live in a blessed communion and fellowship, as my most desired happiness here, and in whom I wait and look for perfect and everlasting glory hereafter.—And I am now so well convinced of the excellency of his Majesty, and the obligations of duty and gratitude that lie upon me, that I do, as was likewise engaged for in my name, solemnly consent to his absolute dominion over me, desiring to partake of the valuable liberty and perfect freedom of serving him, according to his revealed mind and will, all the days of my life: and this in a constant subjection of my whole self, soul, body, and spirit, which are all his, to his pleasure: and in a conformity of every thought, word and work to his commandments."

And now what does the whole of this amount to, but that, feeing by nature we are apostate creatures, serving the devil, the world, and the flesh, and, in that estate, rushing on to eternal ruin, we must needs accept that deliverance from these enemies which Christ offers us? And seeing also there is no reconciliation with God for us but in Jesus Christ, and that otherwise we remain the objects of his wrath, we must close with it, and make it ours in a cordial acceptance of it? And feeing yet farther, that by nature we are alienated from God, being fet up for ourselves to be our own masters, we must return to our place, fubmit to God's government, and yield ourfelves his fervants to obey him? So that the necessity of this wow in the several parts of it lies in the very nature of our fallen state, from which we cannot have deliverance but in the true keeping of this vow; which keeping of the baptismal vow is, you fee, no other than a fallen creature's acceptance of the falvation that is in Jefus Christ. For only suppose a man truly acquainted with the fad circumstances of his natural state, as a state of sin under the devil, the world, and the flesh, a state of wrath, and a state of alienation from God, and what will he defire? 'When he fees what a state of fin and spiritual death he lies in, and what wretched monsters have the guidance of him, will he not wish to be set free from them, and to be taken out of his horrid condition? When he fees death at his door, and hell opening its mouth to fwallow him up in its everlasting and most intolerable slames, will he not with to be faved from fo great a damnation? to have God

reconciled to him, and to exchange everlasting misery for endless glory? And finally, when he fees himself without the image of God in his foul, his affections alienated from him, and that he has no love towards him, nor defire after him, nor delight in him, nor any thing, in short, of the obediential spirit of a dependent creature remaining within him; will he not wish to be restored to original purity, seeing without this he knows he cannot be capable of any happiness in God, and that in heaven itself he should miss of a reward? You see the whole matter is, a fallen creature, made fensible of his fallen state, desires help; and when he finds that help offered him in Christ, he accepts it: that is to say, seeing Christ offers him deliverance from fin, the world, and the devil, he accepts it; feeing Christ offers him deliverance from wrath and hell, he accepts it; feeing Christ offers to restore unto him the image of God upon his foul, he accepts it; the vow itself being but the public declaration and avowal of fuch his acceptance.

Such is the nature and the necessity of the baptismal vow. And taken in the light wherein the matter now lies before us, three very plain and incontestible consequences present them-

felves to us, highly worth our notice.

I. That fuch as deny or are ignorant of the state they are in by nature, cannot have accepted the offer of salvation, nor possibly be keeping the baptismal vow.

II. That fuch as are not keeping the baptismal vow are still

in their natural state.

III. That they who are keeping it are actually in a state of present salvation.

All which have been glanced at before, but now require a

more distinct consideration.

First, Such as deny, or are ignorant of the state they are in by nature, cannot have accepted the offer of salvation, nor possibly be keeping the baptismal vow, so they must needs be still in their natural state of sin and death. The Christian salvation, (and of course the acceptance thereof, together with the baptismal vow, which is but the declaration of that acceptance) stand altogether upon the supposition of our fallen state, and the several parts of that salvation upon the several circumstances of our condition by nature; so that my acceptance of this salvation can only follow upon my acquaintance with my fallen estate, which consequently if I am unacquaint-

ed with, I cannot possibly accept that falvation. Confider, therefore, have you been made deeply and thoroughly acquainted with your fallen and lost condition by nature? Have you been brought to fee yourfelf an apostate creature, in whom dwelleth only a principle and body of fin, which is perpetually fuggesting to you its evil, that is, its sensual, earthly and devilish motions; a principle that naturally engages to itself all your thoughts, defires, and pursuits; a principle, that cannot delight in God, and would not you should have any thought of him, or converse with him; a principle, that naturally wraps you up in yourfelf, shutteth out of your conduct every confideration due to God and man; a principle, that naturally makes you mind nothing but felf, and mean nothing but felf, your own praise, your own interest, your own gratification; a carnal principle, craving indulgence, eafe, pleasure; a worldly principle, all for the present life, its honours and interests; a devilish principle, stirring up in your hearts high thoughts of yourfelf, low ones of others; envy, malice, refentment, revenge, cruelty. I fay, has past and present experience taught you that you are thus born in fin? And have you been made to fee this state of sin as a state of misery, as that whereon is entailed the wrath and curse of God; as that which has made you liable to present death, and future eternal mifery; and as a flate too whereby your foul is robbed of its richest jewel, the image of God, which before the fall was the grand prerogative, the diffinguished glory, the noble qualification of man for ferving and enjoying his Creator? Have you found yourfelf this corrupted, fallen, undone creature? If not, you cannot have accepted the offer of Christ, who cannot be a Physician to the whole. If you deny that you are thus fallen, you disclaim all that can properly be called salvation. determinately strike your name out of the list of those whom Christ shall fave, and put your eternal happiness upon a footing, which, after all your fine reasonings, gives you little support, and which you feel in your own breast will not bear you out against the sense of guilt, and the fear of death and judg-And if you are ignorant of this your fallen state thro' mere carelessness and inconsideration, though I dare not fav your case is alike desperate with that of gainsayers, yet I must fay your state is at present equally bad: you are not, you cannot be in Christ; for you have never found the want of him,

and therefore could never receive him to be your Saviour .-And I befeech you, firs, confider what a wrong you must have been doing to your own fouls. What, not fo much as to enquire whether you were a fallen creature or not? In fo many years to make no fearch, whether you wanted not falvation? And so to suffer the Lord of glory to stand waiting upon you with the offer of falvation, without paying him the least regard? How can you answer this to yourself? Sure I am, if you have not lost your reason, you cannot acquit yourself to your own conscience. And the reflection cannot sit easy upon you, that if there be falvation in Christ, however much you need it, you have no part therein, through your own shameful negligence of looking into yourfelf, and fearching after the deplorable circumstances of your fallen state. But some of you are faying, "I know I am a corrupted creature; I confess " myself by nature a child of wrath; I own the loss of the " image of God which I fuffered in Adam." To you there-

fore I propose for inquiry,

Secondly, Whether you are keeping the baptismal vow. For if you are not, your case is not a jot mended, however exactly you may know both your lost estate by nature, and that there is free and full falvation in Jesus Christ. The point is, whether or no you have closed with, and accepted that falvation; which acceptance has been fully shewn to be no other thing than being in the practice of the baptismal vow. If you are living in fin, or not feeking to apply unto yourfelf the merits of Christ for your pardon and acceptance with God, or not endeavouring in your whole conduct to ferve and please God, it is plain you have not accepted the offered salvation, and are still in your natural state. Now therefore look to yourfelf. If you are the person I am now intending, one that has knowledge, and knowledge only concerning man's misery and Christ's salvation, your case is this. You know that you are a fallen creature, fenfual, earthly, and devilish by nature, and you know that there is deliverance from the dominion of fin in Christ, yet fin hath full dominion over you.-Either you are wholly led away in your heart and conduct by the love of pleafure, of indulgence, of floth, and worldly ease; or you are under the power of covetousness, your mind carking and caring for the things of the world, never fatisfied, and ever intent upon the main point of being something in life through

through your wealth; or you are under the direction of worldly esteem, not daring to be better than is consistent with keeping your reputation among your neighbours; or you are of an unhumbled spirit; wayward, you must have your own way, and are angry whether God or man thwart you; proud, you are lifted up by whatever feems to distinguish you from others. These and the like are your ruling tempers. Now if all or any of this be your case, you cannot say that in practice you are renouncing the devil, the world, and the flesh, or have partaken of Christ's falvation from the dominion of sin. So in this respect it is plain you are still in your natural state.— Then again, you have a knowledge in your head that you are a guilty creature; and that there is perfect reconciliation in Christ; but you have made no use of, you have received no benefit from this knowledge; you are not humbled and alarmed at the fight of your condition; you have no fense of the value of the reconciliation; you have not drawn nigh to the throne of grace by the blood of the atonement; your heart is not sprinkled from an evil conscience by it; you are not filled, you are not fo much as acquainted with what is meant by peace in believing; all that you know of this important matter, is but as the knowledge of a foreign tale, in which you have no concern. See then if the guilt of all your fins does not yet lie upon you. Finally, you know that to be brought to the love and practice of God's commandments is a principal part of Christ's falvation, and of your want by nature. But with any love of God's law in your heart you are perfectly unacquainted, neither can you fay, that to walk therein is your main, your grand, your ruling, nay, that it is in any measure your real, deliberate concern. What, are you striving every day to walk with God, watchful over your conduct, that nothing you do may displease or dishonour him, studying above all things how you may please him, and how you may every day abound therein more and more; and calling ardently and constantly for his grace to enable you to do fo? Alas! you know this is not the employment of your ordinary thoughts and defires; other things, as I have faid, of various kinds, perpetually take you up: God has not the fway and rule within. Of pleasing him you think but little. You do not ask, whether what you do be agreeable to his mind or not. You live in needless temptations. Your ordinary course is forgetfulness of God, and to do what he bids you is far from being the settled design of your life. I beseech you therefore, are you, or can you desire to be thought God's servant? Your conscience testifies you are not, and therefore acknowledges that Christ has not circumcised your heart to love and serve the Lord your God. Brethren, let us not be deceived: Let not our knowledge deceive us. You see whatever knowledge a man has of himself, and of Jesus Christ, yet if he be not in the practice of the baptismal vow, he has not accepted Christ's offer, therefore is no true Christian; and consequently is in his natural state of sin and wrath. A state which, however terrible it be to all that are in it, is peculiarly so to such as know their Master's will and do it not. But,

Thirdly, You are really, though imperfectly, walking in the baptismal vow. Sin has not dominion over you; you are come as an undone finner to Christ, and taken him for your Saviour, and are determined also not to part with him, though you fuffer the loss of all things; to please God and serve him is your main desire and aim: You are therefore in a present state of falvation; for you have heard it made apparent, that to be in the practice of the baptismal vow, and to receive Christ in his whole falvation, are exactly the same thing.-And you are in the practice of this your vow; for you are fighting daily against fin, opposing the body of fin in you, and never lying down under its dominion, though it fometimes gain advantage of you. Are not your eyes upon Jesus for pardon and acceptance with your injured God? Have you not taken, and do you not continually take refuge in his blood, from the accusations of conscience and dread of the law? And your bufiness, is it not, through a supply of the Spirit of the fame Jesus, to live a godly life, desiring to be conformed to God's revealed mind, and making that, and not your own inclinations, nor the humours of others, the measure of your conduct? This you cannot deny, and this you ought to own to the glory of that grace by which you thus stand, and walk in the midst of so many enemies and temptations, and cumbered as you are with flesh and blood. I say, you ought to own it to the glory of God, and to your own comfort and encouragement. And if you are thus walking, I fee not the least cause you have to suspect your being passed from death unto life, although I know also the devil will be persuading you to the

the contrary. Give him no heed; tell him you know his character, that he is the accuser of the brethren; and you know his doom too, that he shall as such be cast down, Rev. xii. 10. Infift upon it against him, that by nature sin had the whole power of you, but now, though it lives, it doth not reign; that you are fure this could not be through any power of your own, any more than a dead body can raise itself out of the grave. -Infift, that once you were dead, but now you are alive, for you find spiritual life in you, you feel the motions, the defires, the longings, the refolves of one whose foul lives, and you are fure it is not your natural felf which doth this, but Christ who liveth in you. And if you are charged with indwelling fin and imperfection, acknowledge it, but avouch the righteoufness of Christ, and insist, notwithstanding, that you are accepted in the well beloved. You, brethren, are the very children of God in Christ Jesus. God hath called, justified, and fanctified you, and you are in the way to glory. You ought to be sensible of the inestimable gift you have received, to value the noble honour you are admitted to, to boaft of the high privileges you enjoy in Christ Jesus. Ah, firs, a very little time will shew the world how bleffed you are. The day of the Lord will shew it. When Jesus comes with power and glory in the clouds, the whole world shall own, that we are the bleffed of the Lord who made heaven and earth. Then finners of every degree, then malignant devils shall own it to their confusion, when Christ shall be glorified in his faints, and honoured in all them that believe. Be of good comfort, therefore, be strong, acquit you like men; hold fast the beginning of your confidence stedfast unto the end, for God will bruise Satan under vour feet shortly. O be sensible how great things the Lord hath done for your fouls!

## SERMON IV.

## Acтs xvi. 30.

## What must I do to be saved?

UR last discourse on the Church Catechism related to the necessity of the baptismal vow in all the parts of it, which necessity was seen to lie in our fallen and lost estate by nature, from which the actual renunciation, faith and obedience, spoken of in the vow, is a present, true, and real deliverance.

The way therefore is now opened to a particular examinasion of the three diffinct parts of it. The first of them is the renunciation of "the devil and all his works, the pomps and " vanities of this wicked world, and all the finful lufts of the " flesh." Which renunciation you fee also hath its three parts; each of which must be separately considered. And it will be proper to introduce this particular explanation by obferving (for the better understanding of the whole of it, and the renunciation itself may be seen at once in a comprehenfive view) that by and fince the fall there is a principle of fin in the nature of man, which I cannot better describe than by calling it a principle of carnal independency, by which man (as the devils did before him) withdraws himself from dependence on God, and fets up for his own master, and to be happy as well as he can without God. Now man thus fet up for himfelf, and determined by his fallen nature to have nothing to do with God, and to feek his happiness not in God, finds himself in a world which he looks upon as his own, and to which he entirely gives himfelf up, feeking in the things of it to gratify his proud independent spirit, and to please his carnal inclinations. Into this state of carnal independency he was originally led through the malicious artifice of the devil, who, having feduced him into this apostafy, and thus fixed him on the world, has made him his own subject, and by means of this carnal independency in his nature, continually wrought upon by the things of the world, does keep him actually and truly under his own proper direction and guidance, all the while he continues in this natural state: So that you see, man in his natural state is a creature who, according to his power, has made himself independent of God in pride, and is under the power of carnal inclination; who is fixed upon the world for the gratification of the independent carnal principle that is in his nature; and is fecretly led by the devil, who, by working upon this principle of fin in a continual and engaging representation of the things of the world, does entirely, yet with the man's own freest choice, direct and lead him as he pleases.

Here we may find then to what the renunciation before us has regard; that it is a professed renunciation of this natural state, and consequently imports a declaration to this purpose; "I do folemuly and refolvedly renounce the fervice of my fin-" ful nature, neither will I henceforward in the pride of my " heart live as independent of God, nor yield myself a ser-" vant to my carnal inclinations. And therefore I do avow " myfelf determined to forego that worldly course of conduct "which is the gratification of my natural pride and carnal in-"clination. As also herewith and hereby I reject Satan's do-" minion, being stedfastly purposed by no art of his to be pre-" vailed upon to return to his fervice, by yielding myfelf to " live after the natural defires of my heart, which I will con-" frantly oppose, notwithstanding all his allurements or terrors, " being firmly determined, in my own person, as well by my " example as by my influence, to do what in my power, is to "combat with and destroy the practice of sin, and therewith "the dominion and tyranny which by means of fin the devil " has established, and is still maintaining in the world."

After this general view of the baptismal renunciation, I am now at full liberty to proceed to the several parts of it. The first of which is a renunciation of the devil and all his works. Here we will first explain the words themselves, and then come to certain practical considerations arising from them.

And

And first, for the explanation. And here we must shew, what is meant by the Devil, what by his Works. And under

each, what it is to renounce him and them.

The Devil. Every one knows that by the devil is meant the fallen angels, the leader of whom is here only mentioned, though all of them be intended. But feeing the point is, we are here renouncing the devil, it is plain that he is confidered not fimply as he is in himself, but as he stands related to us. For to renounce fignifies to refuse, forfake, and cast off; and this we could not be called upon to do in the prefent case, unless the devil had concerns with us. Wherefore by the devil in this place is to be understood, the devil as he stands related to us in our natural state. And what his relation to us in that state is, is very plain from the titles given him in fcripture; where he is called the Prince of this world, the God of this world, and the like: Expressions which evidently set him out as having dominion over the world, that is, over the men of the world, all of us by nature, who, while we are in our natural state, are of this world, and as such of the devil, his actual, real subjects. By the devil, we mean the devil as having usurped a dominion over us, the devil as our king, prince, and ruler.

Confequently, when we fay we renounce the devil, we mean, that we renounce the devil as having dominion over us, that we cast off his service, that we no more allow him to have any guidance and direction of us. An angel may say, "I have no dealings with the devil;" but a sinner must say more. "Once I did, but now I will serve him no longer, I will submit to no more of his orders, I declare myself none of his subjects, I will pay no regard to his intimations, I will not yield myself again to him upon any of his fair but false enticements, I will not be seduced by his lies, nor frightened by his terrors into his service; him as my prince and master I absolutely and for ever disavow, and to him and his interests I am a professed determined enemy." It follows,

And all his Works. I not only renounce him, but also all his works. Though it be true, that all sin in general is originally the work of the devil, as far as his tempting thereto may make it his; and though it be true also, that there are certain sins, such as pride, malice, envy, and the like, which in

a peculiar propriety may be called his, because first and most malignantly in him: yet inasmuch as sin in general, and these devil-like sins in particular, are more properly ours, when considered as dwelling in us, than his who does but tempt us to them; and inasmuch also as all sin in general and particular is actually included under the lusts of the sless, and there renounced; I conceive that by the works of the devil here must be understood something different, and therefore, that it means sin, in general and particular, in a peculiar reference to the devil's kingdom, and all such things as the devil supports his dominion by; for these are his own proper works, and are

wrought for his own proper end.

Accordingly when I fay, I renounce all the works of the devil. I declare, First, That because it is by fin that the devil maintains his dominion in the world, I will practife no fin: neither in me nor by my means shall he hold dominion through my fin. I declare, Secondly, That, fince it is by the general countenance given to fin in the world that he upholds his tyranny, he shall not have the countenance of my example and influence to support his cause. And I declare, Thirdly, That I myself will not give into it, and will discourage in others those various lying artifices of his, by which he keeps up his hellish usurpation upon earth; such as all kinds of superstitious usages, which have no foundation in the word of God. and do ferve to keep men from him by the deceit of the devil. and his holding them under unreasonable fears, as idolatry among the Heathen, false worship among the Papists, and among us faith in charms, ominous days, fortune-tellers; conjurors, and the like. Fourthly, Since by raifing perfecution against the church of God, the devil attempts at last to support his kingdom, therefore I will not have a hand in any fuch work. Seeing by these and the like things the devil works to fupport his kingdom, which by feducing Adam unto fin he erected in the world, I declare, that I will not meddle with any of them, and that I disclaim all his works of darkness, being absolutely resolved, that as I will no longer serve him myfelf, fo I will not allow myfelf in the practice of any one thing, great or fmall, by which he does in his fubjects and followers labour to keep himfelf in the possession of his usurped government over the wicked world.

And thus much of the explanation. Let us come now to

the improvement; which shall consist of an examination, and a fuitable exhortation, as our case shall be.

The examination is: Have we renounced the devil and all his works? This inquiry will ferve to make what has been fet forth more plain and practical. Have we renounced the devil and all his works? that is, the devil as a prince, who by nature holds an absolute dominion over us. Have we seen the devil holding a dominion over the world? Have we feen that the most of mankind are in subjection to it? Have we seen him leading all those without exception who are not delivered by Christ, captive at his will? Have we seen that ourselves are his natural-born subjects? Have we seen his dominion over ourselves and others with abhorrence and detestation? Have we gone over from him ourselves unto Christ, and declared against him, to win others from him unto the Lord? Brethren, have we thus feen, hated, and forsaken the kingdom of the devil? Take notice, this cannot be the case, if we be not renouncing the works of the devil, those works whereby the devil holds his dominion upon earth. Wherefore are none of you committing fin? What, my dear brethren, none of you committing drunkenness, or swearing, or sabbath-breaking, or fornication? What not one who is guilty of any of thefe things? No; nor one covetous person, one proud, one revengeful person here; nor one liar, nor one lover of pleasures. nor one living after the course of this world? What, is not fin practifed by any of us? Can we all fay, I am clean, every one for himself in the presence of God? Well, whosoever cannot, whosefoever conscience pronounces him guilty, may know, and must be told, that he is of the devil. It is not I that fay this on my own authority. It is God that fays, "Whofoever committeth fin is of the devil," belongs to him, and is his fervant. You do not, I am fensible, like yourself to be, or to be told that you are the devil's child. Why then you must by grace for sake sin, for till you do that, while you commit fin, you are of the devil; every drunkard is of the devil, every whoremonger of the devil, every swearer, every liar of the devil, every covetous, vain, carnal, proud, revengeful perfon, is of the devil. Nay, firs, but we are all still either of the devil or not; and this one word shall prove us, " he that "committeth fin is of the devil, for whofoever is born of "God, doth not commit fin." And is it true then, that eve-

ry foul living in fin is the devil's child and property? O that ever that monster should have so many children where Christ is named, and among those who are baptised into his name! Nay, you fay but I trust I am not committing fin. Well; but are you not carelessly encouraging it in the world? I do not ask whether you designedly encourage it. To do this is to be a very devil incarnate. And yet (it must be spoken out) we have heard of fuch things particularly, fuch as encouraging, forcing, and deceiving others into the great fin of drunkenness; but I ask, are you not carelessly encouraging fin in the world? But how shall this be determined? Why, if you care not though Satan have the upper hand of Christ in the world, if you do not fo much as confider whether your conduct be for the encouragement of Christ's kingdom or the devil's, if you will not forego the veriest trifle for the cause of Christ, and because you see it does, or fear it may, encourage fin in the world; I befeech you, is not this carelefsly, at least, being an encourager of it, and can you then be Christ's friend? Can you be doing Christ's work? Are you not plainly doing the devil's? And if you are ferving the devil's interest, judge yourself whose servant you are. Permit me to ask farther; while you are thus careless about the cause of Christ, are you not also an enemy to it? You know that perfecution is the devil's work for the maintenance of his kingdom, and if you fet yourfelf against those who profess to ferve Christ, for no other reason than because they profess to do fo, do not you evidently lend your hand to the devil, and in fact, however ignorantly, avow yourself to be his friend, while you thus declare yourfelf to be the enemy of Christ? Suffer me to deal freely, where your fouls are at stake. From what motive can any one fet himfelf by foolish jests, banter, ridicule, or whatever influence, to discourage those who defire to live after the commands of Christ, and if they are not to be fneered nor frightened from their purpose, to look upon them with difgust and an evil eye, or to be ready to do them a bad turn? I befeech you, what manner of spirit is this? Does it come from above or below? Is it the mind of Christ or of his adversary?

And now, what fays confcience upon this enquiry? Are we or are we not, renouncing the devil and all his works? If we are not declared enemies of the kingdom of fin, if we live in No. 1.

the practice of it, if our examples encourage it, if we are enemies to and oppofers of ferious feripture godliness (if, as I might have added above, but I chose not to detain you) if while we are living after the course of the world, we are propping ourselves by vain superstitions, and putting our faith in the devil instead of Christ; then it is manifest whose subjects we are, and that we have not yet renounced the devil and his works. But if to fee the extent and cruelty of Satan's dominion, be our grief and abhorrence; if we determinately forfake the practice of fin ourfelves, and will not wittingly by our example give it the least countenance in others; if in deed as well as word, we fland up for the cause and the people of Christ, and discountenance every thing great or little that makes for the kingdom of the devil, then it is not less manifest on the other part, that we have indeed renounced the devil and all his works.

And shall I now need fay any thing more to fuch as have been found in their own consciences the servants of Satan? To think of being in subjection to that monster, who is the avowed open enemy of the God that made him, the very height and summit of all malignity and fin, whose heart knows nothing but cruelty, revenge, fury, and most malicious pleafure in our ruin; to think of ferving his interests too, of being employed night and day in promoting his hellish designs in the world; of being given up in all the actions of life to enlarge and establish his kingdom; to think of being made use of as his tools, presumptuously to oppose, and, as it were, to brave God to his face; to publish abroad the devil's triumph; to hinder, hurt, and wound the cause of that gracious Tefus, who fo kindly came and died to fave us, and to be fet up against all those that own and follow him! To think of this! What need of arguments? What can be faid more? If there were no hell wherewith the devil will reward fuch faithful fervices, what need be faid more? O firs, if you would but think whom you ferve, and what dishonourable fervices you are employed in, you could not be eafy, you would by grace change mafters, and flee unto Jesus to deliver you from the power of the devil. The Lord God Almighty, in whose hands ten thousand devils are but as the dust of a balance, enable you to do fo.

And you the children of God, the followers of the Lamb,

who hath delivered you from the fnares of the devil; will you, can you stand by and see these your poor brethren led captive by Satan, employed in his work, and going down to his dark dreadful habitation? Can you see this, and not mourn over them, and pray for them? Ah mourn and pray for these immortal fouls! Where, where is your pity? Where is your zeal, if you do not mourn, and pray, and labour for them? Methinks we should pray down heaven upon their heads, to consider what a condition they are in, how fast Satan holds them in his chain! You know how often, how earnestly I have pleaded with them. And do not you still fear, as I do, that they will not now be prevailed upon? O if you have any love for Christ or them; if you would wish to see them with you in the bosom of Abraham, in the arms of Jesus, pity them and pray for them. Ah, you know their time is short. How fuddenly will they be where I tremble to think of their dwelling for ever, unless something be now done for them! Now, now, pity and pray for them. Sirs, you will not, you cannot furely stand still in such a cause. O, that I had the tongue of a Paul to provoke you! O, that I had but a little of his zeal for Jesus! Why, firs, it is the cause of Jesus. It is the cause of Jesus against Satan. Why are we not more ready to spend and be spent for Jesus? To you, and alas to me among the rest, he has intrusted his cause, his interest, his honour, in this place. It is by you the kingdom of Satan must be confronted and confounded in this place. What then are we doing? Shall we still continue so little to bestir ourselves? Up, my friends, Satan is a vanquished enemy. Jesus thrust him headlong from heaven. O watch, pray, live, die for the confusion of the kingdom of the devil, and for the advancement of the kingdom of the Lord Jefus.

# SERMON V.

### Acrs xvi. 30.

#### What must I do to be saved?

THE intimate connection there is between the three things we are called upon as Christians to renounce, should be carefully attended to, that we may preferve upon our minds the clearest conviction of the necessity lying upon us to renounce them all. The devil reigns by means of our corrupt affections; and the power and prevalence of these is maintained by being fixed upon the world, and engaging us in the pursuit of the things of it. As long as the world is allowed to have the ascendancy, the corrupt principle does in that very ascendancy hold the direction of us, and we remain the subjects of Satan. Wherefore the actual renunciation of one of of these, is in fact the renouncing them all. When the devil is dethroned, the flesh does not rule, and the world has lost its influence. When the affections are withdrawn from the world, the flesh is in a state of subjection, and the devil cast out. When the flesh is mortified, the world is rejected, and the devil has lost his power. You fee, turn it which way you will, it is but faying over again the very fame thing; and therefore, that the renunciation of any one of these three things is impossible, while either of the other are submitted If you have not renounced the dominion of the devil, you are actually ferving the world and the flesh; if you are a friend of the world, the devil and the flesh are your masters; and to yield to the flesh is inevitably connected with living after the course of the world, and serving the devil.

I am now to speak of renouncing the pomps and vanities of this

wicked world. Concerning which my method shall be as before, first to explain the matter, and secondly to improve it.

This wicked world — The world in itself is not wicked, being God's creature, and therefore is, as every creature of God is, declared to be good, I Tim. iv. 4. But when the world is confidered as it is abused in the use of it through the corruption and degeneracy of our hearts, and as being full of those who give up their hearts to it instead of God, it may well be called a wicked world. There are two reasons therefore why you are taught to call the world wicked; one, because our perverted hearts are fet thereupon in a wicked abuse and forgetfulness of God, to seek our happiness therein, and to place our trust upon it: the other, because the number of those who follow this perverted propenfity of their hearts, and in divers ways feek their all in the world, is fo great, that they in a manner overspread the whole face of the earth: in reference to which St John faith, We know that the whole world lieth in wickedne/s. By this wicked world then is to be understood the world when it is made the supreme ruling object of our defires, in a conformity with the maxims, customs, and authority of the generality of mankind who live upon the same worldly plan.

By the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, we are to apprehend in general those various things that are in the world, which draw and engage unto a worldly course the most of mankind, indeed all but those few who are taken out of the world by the transforming power of faith in Jesus Christ.—And therefore more particularly those things by which the world captivates and enslaves all men by nature, and the most of men continuedly in fact; such as honour, riches, pleasure, and the like, that is (to say all in two words) the indulgence

and the pride of life.

To renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, must therefore accordingly mean these three things. First, In a steady, constant, and resolute opposition to the desires of our corrupted nature, to withdraw the affections from this present state of things, so as no longer either to seek happiness, or to place considence therein, but to be determined to seek our all in God. And how reasonable is it that it should be thus! how dishonourable to God that we should ascribe all sufficiency to the creature, and deny it to the Creator, by seek-

ing our all in it, and not in him! Secondly, To give up in defire and pursuit every particular thing that is in the world, when considered as standing in competition with God for the love and trust of our hearts, or the direction of our conduct; whether it be worldly ease or pleasure on the one side, or worldly esteem or interest on the other. And consequently, Thirdly, To be disposed, and to live and act in a direct contrariety to the children of this world who make up the bulk of mankind, departing absolutely from their aims and pursuits, totally disavowing the authority of worldly custom, resolutely foregoing worldly example as any rule of conduct, disclaiming all those maxims which the world has given its countenance and sanction to, as being vile and abominable; and finally, at no rate either loving inordinately, or seeking eagerly, or using selfishly, oftentatiously, and indulgently, the world, and the

things of it as they do.

The whole of the matter put together, amounts to this.— The true believer in Jesus Christ makes his profession in regard to the world, and fays, 'I have chosen God to be my portion, to whom I defire, and am determined to give up all my affections of my heart, making him my only hope and all my happiness. It is not without shame and forrow that I reflect how, in conformity with the inclination of my corrupt nature, I have fadly and finfully fuffered myfelf to be carried out in the defires of my foul after this prefent evil world, feeking my happiness in it, and fixing my trust upon it, faying thereunto, in the disposition of my heart,-Thou art my God. But I have purposed, and by the grace of God am determined that henceforward the Lord, the invisible and eternal God, shall be my God. I disclaim and disavow the world to be any more the object of my · love and defire, my hope and delight, my trust and confidence: I cannot ferve these two masters; I renounce the world, I regard it with hatred and detestation, as standing in competition for my heart with God; now I have faid unto the Lord, and now I publicly declare it, Thou art my God. And farther, as I do thus in general renounce the world, fo do I also more particularly every thing that is in it, the indulgence, the interest, the reputation it offers me, in such fort, that neither of them shall be near my heart as God is, and all of them shall be chearfully yielded up when God's

honour or any claim of duty to him calls for them. And finally, fince through the corruption of our nature I fee the world and the things of it univerfally abused, that the children of men every where have their affections set upon it, and that they are eagerly bent upon the pursuit of these prefent things alone, therefore I think myself bound not to enter into any of their ways, not in the least measure to be biaffed by the mere influence of custom and example in matters of religion, nor to subscribe to the authority of the world in any thing relative to my conduct; but to be always on my guard against the example and maxims of it, strenuoully to oppose them in all my behaviour, and by no means 6 to use the world as they do who are of the world, whether by priding myself upon whatever distinguishes me in it, or by enjoying the things of it with finful gratification and indulgence."

From the Explanation, I pass on to the Improvement.

And here it is very reasonable that we inquire, whether we have renounced the pomps and vanities of this wicked world?-Concerning which, the leading question is this,-"Have we renounced the world itself?" But before this is refolved, observe, if to renounce be to reject, forego, and forfake, and we are all bound to renounce, then naturally we are all of the world, for we cannot forfake what we were never related to and connected with. And in truth the state of man by nature is practical atheism. Reflect a moment on the earliest period of your memory and reason, and you will observe, that your whole heart, in the desires, hopes, and fears of it, was fixed on the things you found about you.-Whether your defires and pursuits at that time were of importance or not in themselves, is not material to the present question; but whatever they were, you found them fixed on the world, and not on God. Him you delighted not in. God was out of fight. As to any love of him, or trust upon him, he was to you as if there were no fuch Being. The world was your all. And thus it continued to be, if it be not fo to this hour, you lived without God in the world, till by the light of the gospel the misery of your natural state was laid open to you, and you were brought to God in love through faith in Jesus Christ. The point then to be decided is, whether you have been to this day fet at liberty, and in the fincerity of

your heart do acknowledge God for your All, instead of the World? Now therefore, my brethren, deal fairly and plainly with yourselves, and resolve the important question. To which of the two do you give your hearts? Is it to the world? or is it to God? To both at once they cannot be given, because they are direct opposites; and yet both put in a claim for your hearts: the world by natural usurped possesfion, God by right. Is then the world cast out? Has God your heart? Are you at a loss how to determine this? I will tell you. You may determine it this way. If you find the defires, the hopes, the fears, the love, the delight of your heart to be habitually on God, you may answer in the affirmative. But if, although you have some thoughts of God on occasions, some uneasy fears of him, some wishes and hasty purpofes of ferving him, and although you have never fo clear a knowledge in your head that God is better for you, and has a better title to your heart than the world, nevertheless you find, for one feeming or real defire after God within you, there are a thousand after the world, and that your fears, cares, hopes, and prospects, do habitually run out on that side, then it is a plain case that you have not the love of God in you, and that you have not as yet renounced the world. - This is the leading question. But it is rather general. Let us come to particulars, which may better shew whether we have renounced the world or not: for it is evident we cannot have renounced the world, if we be under the power of any of the things of it. Wherefore how does the point stand in respect of your interest in the world? Is not this nearer your heart than God? Certainly it must, if while you are very earnest about promoting it, very fearful of whatever would feem to threaten you with disappointment in it, very active to improve every opportunity of advancing in it, you experience no fuch earnestness, fear, and activity in seeking God, lying on that side in cold indifference, and either not confidering what the will of God is, when your advantage is in question, or making a facrifice of that will by going unwarrantable lengths to pleafe those by whom you are profited in your worldly interest.— Sirs, it is a common faying with many of you, "We must do " fuch things. If we do not do them, we cannot get our bread." But this is a worldly maxim: whoever follows it is of the world. He carries his own condemnation in his mouth:-" We

"We must do such things." What is this but as much as faving, you will allow them to be finful; and yet you do them, because otherwise you cannot live? But this is not true. You may always live without thus finning, but not perhaps always in that way or by those means which you have fet your hearts upon; and which while you will not forego, what are you but professing thereby in plain terms your renunciation of God, and determination to cleave unto the world? And what may you reasonably think God will say at last? In truth, what less than this, "thou hast rejected me, thou hast had thy portion, go therefore, fince thou would have it fo, inherit the fruit of thy choice in an eternal feparation from my favour and presence?" Again, how doth the matter stand with you upon the article of pleasures? Are you not a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God? What, not when your mind is perpetually running upon thefe, and while you hardly think of God once in a month? when you are as one bereaved, if no pleafure be in prospect, and even at such a feafon when time lies heavy on your hands, you cannot be comforted in the thought of God? When every moment is too long in prayer or the church, and whole hours, and every day too short when you are in your amusements? Surely in such case you cannot persuade yourself to believe you have renounced the pleasures of the world. Once more, How can you answer respecting the esteem of men? Can you say you love the praise of God rather? What, when you dare not do what your conscience bids you, lest you should be laughed at, lest you should forfeit the favour of your friends, lest you should be reckoned stiff and particular? If you will only go so far in religion as is confistent with your worldly reputation, and will not, dare not move one step farther, taking all the pains you can to fatisfy yourfelf that all beyond is too much, and to make the word of God speak a language which will suit this defire you have of keeping the praise of men, you may as foon prevail upon us to think it is dark night at mid-day, as that you have renounced the world and the things of it. If at any rate the defire of man's esteem be your idol, if you value your knowledge, learning, wealth, or other accomplishments, because of the income of worldly esteem they bring you in, not because of the glory you may bring to God, or the good you may do to men by them; if you facrifice to the pride

pride of life, and some way or other determine to be of importance as well as you can, it is a manifest point that you are of the world -But besides these, there is still another question to be refolved. Are you, or are you not renouncing the men of the world? that is, their customs and maxims, the influence of their example, and in thort, the whole authority which the usage of a wicked generation has established, and their manner of using the world and the things of it? Time will not permit me minutely to confider the feveral particulars comprehended under these heads; but the resolution of this fingle question shall ferve to decide the whole, to wit, ' Do we make the word of God, or the ways of men, the measure of our conduct?' This will feem an abfurd inquiry at first thought by those who, while they are living as others do, are at the same time professed readers and hearers of the scriptures. "What, (will fuch fay) do you think we do not be-"lieve our Bibles? or that we are so stupid as to judge that to " be right, though all the world should concur in faving it, "which we hear God himself tell us to be wrong?" This, I confess, is talking well: but where is the corresponding practice? If you do not fearch the scriptures really to know what the will of God is in every case, but are easily satisfied with every body fays fo,' and 'every body does fo,' and think it very strange if they will not 'do like the rest of the world,' I befeech you, after all, what is this more than fine talking?— The most of people go down with the current of the times, and take it for granted all is well, if they do not that which the world reckons ill. 'It is fcandalous;' and that alone is the measure of forbearance; the world will not bear you out in what is scandalous. To be a drunkard, thief, whoremonger, is scandalous; upon such things the world has past sentence, so you judge them very bad. To be liberal and decent, this the world countenances, and this you approve. But when a man denies himself, and begins to lead a heavenly life, O it is too much,' the world cries, and fo you join in the cry. I pray you, what does all this prove, but that you live, think, and act upon the authority of a wicked world, and not upon the authority of God? Brethren, many now are the years that in the execution of my office I have been declaring to you the mind and will of God concerning you, and I verily think God can witness for me that I have not wittingly kept

back or falfified any part of it, through fear of disgusting and displeasing you. But now, what has been the fruit of this my much preaching, and your much hearing? Is it this after all, that you are all living after your Bibles, and not after the ways of the world? Alas! it is not so; it is not so. Many, many of you join hand in hand, and keep each other in countenance in living directly contrary to your Bibles. And shall I need tell such, (alas! they well know themselves) that they are wholly living after the world?

And now, my brethren, after this inquiry, what is the report from every breast? what say we, 'Are we of God? or

are we of the world?'

If we are still of the world, I doubt not our consciences have been telling us, while the point has been under examination. Every child of this world, here present, has been testifying, and is now unavoidably testifying, against himself, I am not of God.' And will you confider what is implied in that testimony? Not of God! What can be more uncomfortable than that thought? Not of God! Then God is not your God; you have no interest in his almighty power, fatherly care, and pardoning grace. He does not regard you as a child; he has no provision for you in his family, he does not comfort you with his presence, you do not taste of his reviving communications, you are a forlorn creature, living in the world without God, without rest, without content, full of fears, big with anxieties, torn with disappointments; you feek peace, but do you find her? you fly to pleasure, but she dwells not there; you run to company, but you cannot meet her; you say, wealth shall buy her for me, but you discover she is not to be purchased with gold. Do not you, children of this world, discern how unhappy you are in the midst of your all? But then what apprehensions beset you at the thought of death? when it does but threaten you, then what a terror possesses your spirits! you are at present miserable every day; yet because ye dread being more so hereafter, you are willing to drag on in your chains. For you fons of care, you daughters of pleasure, you that give yourselves up to the pride of learning and wealth, to the pomp of distinction and appearance, what are your prospects in death, and after death? What in the world of spirits? What, when the whole fafabric of the world shall be dissolved in slames? What are they in the new heaven and earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness? Could you persuade yourselves there is no fin in your choice, yet there would be infinite folly. For what folly equal to preferring a perishing world to an eternal God? But is there not fin in fuch a choice? Look at the glorious perfections of God, and fay. Ask, who made the world, and fpeak. Inquire why God gave you a being, and declare. Confider by whose bounty you live, and tell me. O firs, there is infinite fin in your choice, because infinite dishonour is done by it to God. And unless you are prevailed upon to make a better choice, you will foon find there is infinite ruin in it too .-When the day of mercy and patience is over, then will you know what a fearful thing you have been doing, in determi-

nately and daily taking the world for your portion.

Wherefore let us all confider, what a glorious privilege we are all called to, and as many as believe in Jefus Christ have an interest in, I mean that of having God for a portion. O what a heaven would this earth be, were this the case of all! And how much of heaven does it bring down into the fouls of those whose case it is! To have the all-sufficient, the living, the ever-present, the almighty, the eternal Being for our God, guarding us with his arm, guiding us with his hand, keeping us under his eye, directing all for us, and over-ruling all for us, dwelling among us, making us his care, conducting us through all the diffressful passages of life, comforting us in a dying hour, receiving our fouls to the nearest fellowthip with himself in the moment of their separation, raising up and glorifying these present houses of clay, forming a new habitation for us, whence forrow, fear, and fin, shall be banished for ever! Who can describe the thousandth part of the bleffedness there is in having God for a portion? I cannot. And yet I can fay enough of it to load with the justest confufion all those who will have their portion in this world. And to think, my dear brethren, that God offers himself to us to be our God and portion; that at infinite expence he has opened the way through the blood of Jesus to his being so! To think that he is inviting us to it by all the endearments of love, and urging us to accept it by all the tender arguments of goodness, pity, and patience ! - Sirs, I can only ask you if David . David speaks not the very truth, Blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God? O that we could all say with him,—Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I can desire besides thee! I beseech you, let us not rest till we can say that word with sincere hearts, to the glory of God, and to the present unspeakable comfort, and suture infinite happiness of our souls, through Jesus Christour Lord.

# SERMON VI.

#### Acts xvi. 30.

### What must I do to be saved?

THE first and second parts of the baptismal renunciation having been explained, I am now to speak of the last part of it, the renouncing all the finful lusts of the flesh.

And here also we will first explain, and afterwards improve. The Flesh.—By this is not meant man's body, which in itfelf confidered is not finful, any more than the natural appetites and passions thereof, which in themselves are good, and under due regulations, ferve to very good purposes. But by the flesh is understood the principle of fin that is in fallen man, very frequently called in scripture by this name. It is that finful principle in our nature, contracted by Adam thro' his eating the forbidden fruit, and from him derived down to all who are naturally engendered of him.

Lusts of the flesh—that is, its defires, inclinations, imaginations, or affections. The flesh is like some corrupt fountain that is always fending out bad water, or it refembles a filthy carrion which gives forth continually its naufeous and poisonous stench. Just as the good nature of an angel is always bringing forth good motions and defires, fo the evil nature of fallen creatures is as plentiful the contrary way, ceafelefsly burfting out into bad and pernicious motions and lufts.

Sinful lusts of the Flesh.—I have said that the necessary appetites of the body, fuch as hunger, thirst, and the like, are not finful: but the lufts of corrupt nature are fo, being directly contrary to God and duty, moving us only to fin, and the very immediate and principal causes of all actual sin in

thought,

thought, word, and deed, when they are indulged and gratified.

All the finful lusts of the Flesh. - And they are exceeding many. In which regard the flesh is called the body of fin, because like the natural it has many members. Yet they are all reduced to two general heads by St Paul, when he favs, Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. Where by the filthiness of the flesh, he means all such lusts as are properly fenfual; and by the filthiness of the spirit, all such lusts as are properly spiritual. The head of sensual lusts includes the feveral branches of uncleanness, intemperance, sloth, idleness, ease, pleasure, to all which sensual nature inclines us, and after all which it is perpetually lufting. The other head is spiritual filthiness, the sum of which in one word is pride, including felf-fufficiency, conceit, felf-will, impatience, unbelief, disobedience, covetousness, jealousy, envy, malice, revenge, cruelty, all which are either pride itself or the genuine effects of it, and all of which together (covetousness only excepted, which is appropriate to man) do constitute the character of the devil, and are the real principles of all his conduct.

Now all these sensual and spiritual lusts being naturally in us, and actually having the whole direction of us, until by grace they are dethroned and brought into subjection, the true Christian knowing this, being advised of their sinfulness, being brought to hate and lothe them, and to long earnestly for an increasing freedom from their influence, and for a greater mortification of that principle of fin out of which they iffue, doth in the strength of God declare his rejection of their dominion, his stedfast purpose to oppose and not to gratify their motions, and to use all possible means for weakening and crucifying their force and power, faying, I renounce all the finful lusts of the Flesh. Including in this expression the following declarations: 'I will no longer ferve fin, neither will I yield my members as instruments of unrighteousness to it. I see and detest that accurfed body of fin that dwelleth in me, I declare an irreconcileable war against it; too often have I followed the devices and defires of my own heart, I declare war against my natural felf, I will be no more the willing, ready flave of my fenfual and spiritual lusts, by the help of God I will no more obey the brutal and devilish inclination

of my most finful nature; it shall be my endeavour to watch and to oppose their every motion; if by force they gain ade vantage, they shall not maintain it, and since I know them to be crafty, I will labour to find them out, and when I fee, I will not spare them; I will not hearken to their importunities, I will not be tired out by the frequency and obstinacy of their e pleadings, I will not yield to their cry, be what they contend for of never fo great importance to my present interest, ease, or reputation, and if what they ask be never so little, I will onot grant it. They will, I know, have an influence in all I think, fay, and do; but I will endeavour, by the grace of God, it shall be less and less. I fear and expect they will many times gain incidental advantages over me, but, in the ' might of Jesus, they shall not have possession; I renounce them all. I will no longer feek to please and gratify my caral, proud felf; no longer will I give myself up to my fensual inclinations in a life of uncleanness, intemperance, sloth, idleness, ease, and pleasure; neither any more will I indulge to pride, to direct my conduct on the hellish principles of conceit and felf-will, anger and refentment, malice and envy, revenge and cruelty, the praise of men and the pride of life. Such a conduct, both fenfual and proud, I absolutely difclaim; all the motions of my depraved heart that would lead • me thereto, I will resist; and that body of sin, out of which fuch evil motions perpetually arife, I will purfue unto the death. And all this, and whatever elfe is implied in hating, rejecting, fighting against, and crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts, I do intend and defire, and purpose and • promise to perform, when I say, I renounce all the sinful lusts of the flesh."

Let this fuffice for the Explanation. And let us pass on to the Improvement.

And here let us make inquiry,

Are we living in the outward practice of any of these lusts of the Flesh?" I say, of any of them, because you see our profession is to renounce them all. Are we living none of us in the outward indulgence of any sensual lusts? I have shewn you what is meant by sensual lusts, namely, uncleanness, intemperance, sloth, idleness, ease, and pleasure. Are we living none of us in any of the sins of uncleanness? These for the most part are secret sins, and such as, if known at any time, are chiefly

chiefly discovered by their effects, which oftentimes bring many to public shame, and more often others to noisome diseases that will not be concealed. While also there are kinds and degrees of this fin which can only be known to God and a man's own conscience, so closely are they kept from observation.— But God knows all their practices; and all fuch persons also know in their consciences that he holds them guilty, and that they are the servants of lust. But other sins are not so hid; let me then inquire farther, Are none of us living in intemperance? intemperance especially relates to gluttony and drunkennefs. Are we not living in gluttony? certainly there is fuch a fin as intemperance in nieat. And if we are grown nice and delicate, if the plain food of our fathers disgusts us, if we are for elegant dishes beyond what we can afford, or, though we can afford them, if we indulge our thoughts in expecting them, and our palates in using them immoderately; more especially if any of us are fo careful to feed our bellies, that we let our backs go without a covering, and if we like a thing, are refolved to have it without caring what it costs us, it is very evident we cannot clear ourselves of the sin of gluttony. And then as to drunkenness, how are so many alehouses maintained? how are so many families ruined and brought to live on the public by frequenting them? how are there so many nightly clubs? how is fo much precious time spent in places prepared for the purpose, and how are so many grown old before they have attained half their days, if there be no fuch thing as drunkenness among us? But do we know that sloth and idleness, ease and pleasure, (for, that I may not be tedious, I put them together) are also sensual lusts; And that to live in the practice of them is as much a life of indulgence, as if we were to give ourselves up to the groffer fins of lewdness or intemperance; Surely we know it not, else many would not be content to live in them as they do. For what is the life of many, but a mere continuation of doing nothing, because they seem to themselves to have nothing to do, and there is not precisely any thing much amiss in what they do, therefore all were well? But, brethren, to sleep away days and weeks, and months and years, in fauntering, chatting, and visiting, in parties of pleasure abroad, and infignificance at home, however it may appear harmless in the eye of the world, will pass for no better than fenfuality in the eye of God. But to go on from fenfual indul-No. 1.

gence in the outward conduct to spiritual. Are we none of us in the outward indulgence of spiritual lusts? What I mean by the outward indulgence of them, is their habitual direction of our behaviour in the world. Wherefore if you are carried along by conceit and felf-opinion in your conversations and conduct, if you are felf willed, rash, and overbearing, if your behaviour be planned upon the calculation of exalting and maintaining your name in the world; if in your demeanor you endeavour to make every one think you a person of merit and importance; if you will bear no contradiction, but treat all with anger and refentment who do not conform to your ways; if, finally, you live for yourfelf, and none are the better for you any farther than they ferve to gratify your humours, or to promote your interests; if any of this be your outward conduct, all who know you are witnessing against you that you are under the influence of unmortified pride. They fee it in your whole conduct, though you perhaps suspect it not. And if you will not fee, if you will not confider what you do, nor examine into the principles upon which you act, it cannot be wondered if, while all about you know you to be a flave, you alone suspect nothing of the matter. You can see and complain of the pride that reigns in the conduct of others; their felf-feeking, felf-will, impatience, conceit, and fetting themfelves off as they do, render them intolerable to you. You wonder no one tells them of it, you admire they do not fee it themselves, while, in the mean time, you are looking upon your own picture, not in the least imagining it to be yours, or that it is any thing like you. Yet methinks there are some circumstances in a proud character and carriage, that you must be wilfully blind if you do not fee them in yourfelf, while every day you are acting them over. What can you think if in all companies you are industriously and artfully setting yourfelf, your abilities, gifts, or possessions out to view? or what, if you can bear no contradiction, but all must be and do as you would have them in every trifle? What, if every thing and nothing puts you in a passion, and if you break every tie of duty to gratify refentment? What, if every where, and at all feafons, you become all things to all men, that you may gain their praise and esteem? Surely a conduct like this fpeaks plainly enough, and if you do not understand that you

are ferving your spiritual, or in another word, your devilish

lusts; it is even because you will not.

But from the outward practice of any of these lusts, let us pass to the inward. For I would not have you deceived.— And I know there were of old, and that there are still Pharifees in the world, who contrive to keep the outfile tolerably clean, at least in their judgment of the matter, while all is defilement within. Now, therefore, my dear friends, however it appear without, how is it in truth within? Are we there renouncing all the finful lusts of the flesh? It is an easy matter to fay I do; and for the most part they will be most forward to fay they do, who are the greatest strangers to the doing fo. Wherefore I will propose to you certain questions whereby you may certainly know whether you be or not renouncing all the finful lufts of the flesh, by a true opposition made to them in your heart. First, Have you found out that there are fuch fenfual and devilish lusts in you? If you have not, it is plain you cannot be rejecting and refifting them; and if you will still fay, I renounce all the finful lusts of the flesh, when you know not you have any finful lusts within you, you make it evident that you can mean even nothing by what you fay. And accordingly when you are told that fuch lufts dwell in you, and that you are every one of you fenfual, prone to every kind and degree of uncleanness, intemperance, and carnality, fo that you are naturally ready for the very groffest impurities; when you are told that you are full of every spiritual lust, that your natural heart is a fink of pride, conceit, envy, malice, revenge, cruelty, and every devilish lust; I say, when you are told of this, are you not ready to cry out in indignation, "What I? I defy the world; and I will have you to " know I am not fuch a beaft and fuch a devil as you make me." Well then, you profess and openly avow you have not such senfual and devilish lusts in you; so it is past dispute you cannot be renouncing them. O what a lamentable ignorance is there in this Christian country of the fall of man! Every child owns by rote that we are born in fin, but for any real knowledge of the finfulness of the heart, not one of a thousand has the least fuspicion of any such thing. And yet it is most certain, that the knowledge of this is the only ground-work of being in the practice of Christianity.—But you fay you do know this, you are fully fensible that all these sensual and spiritual lusts which D 2 1 have

I have been describing, dwell in you, for you find them always at work, and can by experience, testify this scripture to be true. that every imagination of the thought of man's heart is only evil continually In this case, I ask, Secondly, Do you really hate and long to be delivered from all, whatever they be? This St Paul certainly did, for he cries, in the sense of his hidden lusts, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me trom the body of this death? Look at your fenfual lufts, and look at your spiritual lusts; look especially at that lust, the indulgence of which is most convenient for you, which you cannot deny without peculiar fuffering, which is the very idol of your natural heart, and try if you can fay, calling God to witness,-"This I hate, even this I long to be delivered from, with this I " would not make the least compliance for his name's fake." If you can truly fay this, concerning every kind of pride, and every kind of fenfuality, not cherishing or approving iniquity in your heart, it is manifest that you have the love of God in you, and in the choice of your heart are rejecting all evil ways. But if you only know that you have many lusts of the flesh in you; if, notwithstanding this knowledge, they be not your burden and your grief; if pride or passion, if refentment or vanity, carry you away, and you take little thought of the matter, are speedily reconciled to yourfelf, and foon forget it, as if nothing had been amis, it is not conceivable how you can hate the lusts of your flesh. Now if you judge you have a comfortable answer in this respect also, I go on, (for preventing mistakes in fome, and confirming in others the confidence of God's grace working effectually in them) to ask, Thirdly, Whether your views of the lufts of the flesh are fo humbling, that while they bring you to the blood of Christ for remission of the guilt of them, they also bring you to fue with importunity for the Spirit to deliver you from the power of them, and to mortify them in you continually? You do not fee your lufts in fuch a hateful light as shall dispose you to renounce them, unlefs they bring you thus to the blood and grace of Christ, and that with a suitable importunity. It is the fight of the holiness of God that can alone make any one hate fin within him, and when it does this, he fees himself fo defiled by it, that he cannot think of standing before God but in the righteoufness of Christ, while also he will be earnestly calling upon God to deliver him from the detestable power of it.-Where-

Wherefore however much you seem to hate your lusts (and without hating them you cannot renounce them) yet still you are deceived, if they do not bring you on your knees, and cause you to cry frequently and earnestly for forgiveness of them, and for grace against them. Surely you cannot think you are humbled for that which you do not ask the pardon of, or that you hate what you do not pray to be fet free from. So that if the deep sense of the sinful lusts of your flesh do not lie at the bottom of your prayers, as the very foundationstone of all your intreaties for pardon, and all your cries for grace, you only pray in formality, and are neither hating nor renouncing them. But if you say you do thus pray against them, I ask yet, Fourthly, Whether you are actually, in the strength prayed for, fighting against them? It is this which proves the truth of the whole. Are you actually at war with your hidden lusts? I do not ask, take notice whether the victory is always on your fide: but I ask, whether you be really at war with them? Doubtless you ought to watch and strive that at no time they gain advantage of you. But when they have, do you suffer them to keep it? There lies the point,-If they have thrust themselves in unawares, watching an opportunity, and by and by you thrust out them again as those you will not entertain in your house, it is plain they came in like thieves, and have no right as masters. But now if you give them entertainment; and fuffer them to dwell quietly with you, you will never be able to perfuade yourfelf, and much less God, that you hold them as enemies. The main question therefore is, Are we at actual war with our lusts? If not, in the very nature of the thing, they have necessarily the dominion over us, for they are by nature in possession. And confequently, let us feem to hate them, and feem to pray against them never so much, in truth we do not the one nor the other, but love and entertain them at the bottom, altho' in the apprehensions of God's wrath against us we may in a felfish way wish to be rid of them.

By this time, I would hope, we are all come to some conclusion, whether or no we are renouncing all the sinful lusts of the slesh. In the examination of this interesting point I have been the more particular, both that they who are serving their lusts might have no pretence for ignorance that they are

doing so, and that they who are fet at liberty from them

might rejoice and praise God for their deliverance.

We will conclude with this one thought, which is fuited to alarm the one and quicken the other of you, namely, There is an infinite finfulness in the lusts of our flesh, whether fenfual or spiritual, because they lead in a direct opposition to God, that as a portion, this as a master. Senfuality says, Indulgence is a better happiness for me than God: and pride cries, It is better to be one's master than to serve the most High. But what dishonour is done to God by so base a preference! What, do we fet God fo very low in our estimation, that we reckon the poor indulgences of brute creatures, to eat and drink, and play, preferable to the favour, the prefence, the joy of communion with the ever-bleffed! And do we treat God as fuch a tyrant that we cannot endure his laws? and holding his fervice intolerable, do we fet up for ourfelves? O firs, the angels above do not thus think of God. How infinite is their joy in beholding his face! How unmeasureable their pleasure in fulfilling his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his words! What infinite evil is there not in this carnal, this spiritual lust? My dear brethren, we shall be all fully sensible of it another day. Will not that foul feel it in the bottom of hell, who would not quit his beloved lusts? In the bitterness of his spirit he will cry, "There is no hope in God now, and " without God what horror! I feel, I feel, what is to be with-" out God." And the converted faint, exalted to the highest heaven, when he knows and falls down in ravishing wonder before the majesty of God, what will he think of pride?-When he enjoys the everlasting pleasures at God's right hand, what will he think of carnal gratifications? But God and fin are the very fame now that they will be hereafter. O that we would be wife, that we would confider our latter end! God give us all grace effectually and more abundantly to do fo, for his mercy's fake towards us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

## SERMON VII.

### Acts xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

IN/E have already treated of the first branch of the Baptismal Vow, namely, the renunciation of the Devil, the World, and the Flesh; and pass on now to the second part of it, Faith. What this faith is, its necessity unto falvation, and the fure promise of mercy made unto it, are plainly marked out in the question made by the Jailer, and the answer given him by Paul and Silas, when he asks them, What he must do to be saved? They have but one answer to give him. which is, that he must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. This was the only way, and it was sufficient; if he did this, he should be saved. True faith in Jesus Christ, that is, such a faith as engages to die unto fin and to live to God, is the faith here intended. But we are here to consider it in its nature, and not in its effects of renunciation and obedience, the former of which has already been spoken to, as the latter will be in its proper place.

Introductory to a particular explication of the Creed in its several parts, it will be proper, First, To lay before you in one view, the whole subject matter of this little, but excellent fummary of Christian principles. Secondly, What is the true

nature of faith concerning them.

First, What is the subject matter of the Apostles Creed .-Now the faith in question being plainly divine faith, inasmuch as it is purely conversant about God and things of a spiritual nature; and this divine faith being also Christian faith, it

must needs be, that that creed, which contains the articles of this faith, hath regard unto God, in the Mediator Christ Jefus. For which reason, the whole of the Christian faith is often expressed in the scripture by the single phrase, Believing in the Lord Fesus Christ; because in him it is that God prefents himself unto us in scripture as the object of our faith and hope. These articles therefore do not relate to God abfolutely, but to God in Christ; for God, absolutely considered, is not fet forth as the object of faith to us finners; fuch indeed he is to angels, and to perfect creatures that never finned, but he is not a God to us, otherwise than through a Rcdeemer. So that the substance of the Creed is God, as a covenant God in Christ; consequently, to believe the articles of the Christian faith, is to believe in the one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as in the respective offices of the three divine persons he stands related to us in the Mediator; in the Father, the Maker of all things, as a Father to us; in the Son, as the Redeemer; in the Holy Ghost, as the Sanctifier; and all in and through Jesus Christ; in whom the living members of his body the church, we are affured, have fellowship and communion with this ever-bleffed God as their God, and therewith, prefent forgiveness of fins in this life, and an affured title to a glorious refurrection, and an everlafting life hereafter. In short, as without a Mediator we have no relation to God but that of children of wrath; fo in Christ he is a God unto us for time and for eternity.

Take notice therefore, that who loever repeats this Creed, as the profession of his faith, does thereby virtually declare, that he stedfastly believes himself, otherwise than in Christ, an alien and an outcast from God, a child of wrath, and an heir of hell; and that it is no otherwise than in Jesus Christ, and for his fake, that he has the least confidence to call God his God; or the least hope of forgiveness of his fins in this life; and of happiness in the life which is to come: Now, brethren, do we feriously mean this when we repeat the Creed? If we do not, we either speak without any meaning or distinct thought at all, when we say over these words; (which no doubt is too frequently the case) or else if we do repeat the words, under any knowledge of the fense of them, we do it for decency's fake, to conform to the customary modes of worship in the country where we live, though in

reality we believe nothing of the matter. In this case, we do no better than lie unto God. How can we do so more solemnly, and with more fin, than when in his public worship we avow that with our mouths, which we disavow with our hearts? And yet there are some who will contend, "God " will not damn any of his creatures," as they affect to phrase it, the better to colour over a flat denial of the whole doctrines of the gospel, and a determined purpose of continuing in an impenitent state. There are others who infift, if a man be honest and civil, and charitable to the poor, it matters not what his fentiments are about religion; for with fuch a man all shall be well. How contrary these tenets are to the Christian scheme of falvation contained in the Creed, every one fees; as also no one can help feeing what a gross absurdity, not to fay impiety, is expressed in their conduct, who, while they hold fuch anti-Christian tenets, do nevertheless appear in Christian assemblies, and by their repetition of the Creed in common with the congregation, publicly declare (for this is the very defign of every man's reciting the Creed) that they stedfastly believe there is no salvation out of Jesus Christ; and that the wrath of God, under which all are born, abideth on him who believeth not on the Son of God.

From the subject matter of the Creed, as it has been now fet forth, I cannot but observe farther, how the doctrine of the Trinity is fully contained in it, which is particularly obferved by the compilers of the Catechism, as what is chiefly to be learnt in these Articles of Belief; "I learn to believe in "God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost," ascribing to each his respective office. Now if, by reciting the Creed publicly in the congregation, we profess to believe a Trinity of persons in the Godhead; - and if at the same time, as was just now shewn, we do thereby also profess to believe, that there is falvation in none other but Jesus Christ, then what reason can they who recite this Creed assign for their refusing to join in that which is commonly called the Creed of Athanasius? This latter Creed is, as to the matter of it, in substance the very same with the former; the doctrine of the Trinity, and the one only way of falvation by Jefus Christ, are not a jot more in the one than the other. whoever recites the Apostles Creed, does by so doing declare himself satisfied with every tittle contained in the Creed of Atha-

Athanafius, the damnatory clauses not excepted: for when, by reciting the Apostles Creed, he declares, that there is but one way of falvation, he of necessity consents, that whoever do not hold that way shall undoubtedly and everlastingly perish: fo that, after all the clamour raised against the Creed of Athanafius, nothing lies against it which does not equally lie against the Apostles Creed. And, in truth, the cry for having it laid afide arises from nothing else but a disbelief of the grand doctrines of the gospel, that of the Trinity, and that of falvation by Jesus Christ only; points which do not at all suit with the pride of an unhumbled heart, and which therefore are wished to be taken out of the church; but which, whatever creeds should be rejected or used, cannot be laid aside, without striking out the very being of Christianity, and leaving Christ utterly out of, but in that case would be falsely called his Church. But,

Secondly, What is the true nature of faith concerning these Articles? In explaining this matter I shall need your atten-

tion, while I observe,

1. What is the nature of faith or believing in general.-And this is affenting to a thing as true, upon the report and testimony of others. What I see with my own eyes, what is made out to me upon the evidence of my own senses, I am not faid to believe but to know. Believing comes another way: and is my affent gained by being told a thing by others. person of this place being in the neighbourhood, and seeing a house on fire, knows it; when he comes and informs us of it, we believe it, both he and we affent to the thing, that the house is on fire; but then, he, because he saw it, we because he told us of it. The one upon knowledge, the other by faith.

2. The only ground therefore of Belief is Testimony. In which testimony two things are necessary to gain our affent to what is told us; the first, that we think the person testifying a capable judge of the fact he relates; the fecond, that we are fatisfied he is honest in the relation he makes of it. Were a person out of his senses, or a notorious liar, to tell you he saw fuch and fuch a thing, your affent would be either absolutely refused, or, at most, go no farther than a suspicion that the thing might perhaps be. But did a person whom you judged a capable observer, and an honest relater, assure you of it, you would

would not withhold your affent.

3. The testimony upon which you give affent is different, according to the nature of the things testified of. Things human we assent unto upon the testimony of man, if competent and faithful; but things divine we cannot affent unto upon man's testimony (because the things of God no man knoweth) but upon the testimony of God. Wherefore though human testimony may well beget human faith, that is, belief concerning human things; yet human testimony cannot beget divine faith, that is, belief of divine things. Man cannot know the things of God any farther than he is told them by God himself, one way or other; so that divine faith stands simply upon di-

vine testimony.

4. Human testimony being no ground of divine faith, therefore there is in the world what is called by that name, and is not; as also, there is what is called divine faith, and is so. There is in the world what is called divine faith, yet is not fo. being what is taken up upon man's testimony. And this is the faith that is common in the world. The most believe the fcriptures, not from any real difcernment that they are truly the record of God, but on no other footing than because they are currently received as fuch in the country and church in which they were born and bred; just as the Turks believe the Alcoran to be a divine book, because every one about them fays it is from God. This every fensible person sees to be mere prejudice, and which fets Christianity on that very footing, upon which all the various things that are called religion throughout the divers nations of the world, may be alike justified; fince all they, as well as we, can fay, it is the religion of my country, and all fay it is the true religion. But possibly, though the absurdity be glaring, yet the true cause of fuch a falfe faith may not have been enough attended to, namely, the standing upon the incompetent testimony of man for the belief of divine things; and in the want of fuch a confideration, many, who have feen the abfurdity of believing thus upon cuftom, may have run upon an absurdity not a jot less glaring, by taking it for granted there was no truth in Christianity, because the most of those who profess it are capable of giving no better a reason for their doing so. But,

5. Besides this vulgar prejudice misnamed faith, as standing only on man's testimony, there is also true faith, standing on

the testimony of God. And this is the faith here in question, the true faving faith, to which all the promifes of the gospel belong. Concerning this faving faith four things must be noted, as abundantly sufficient to distinguish it from whatever else is called faith. (1) The subject, or person, in whom it is wrought, an humbled finner. The promises of the gospel are absolutely confined to the humble; so that neither he who is not brought to a fense of his lost estate as a sinner, nor even he who, awakened to a fense of his ruinous condition, is only defirous that he may not perish, can be the subject of this faith; but he who, besides seeing his danger, is convinced of the evil of his fins against the bleffed God, their hainous guilt and deep demerit, and earnestly longs after reconciliation with him; who, in opposition to the unawakened, knows himself to be a finner; and, in the opposition to the only awakened, not alone defires to escape hell, and go to heaven, from a mere fefilsh regard to his own happiness, but rather desires the approbation, favour and love of God, as his chief good; this is the only person in whom this saving faith is ever wrought. (2.) The object, or the thing believed by this humbled foul, which is the promise, God in Christ, holding himself out to the finner by and in the promise. God in Christ is the object upon which faith fastens; none other can satisfy the humbled soul's occasions, nor in any fort fill up its desires. It is no true faith if Christ be not the supreme object of the soul's defire; if there be a looking to other than him for hope or happiness. (3.) Besides the subject and the object, there is the testimony of God unto the promife, making out the truth of it to the humbled foul. The promise lies in the scripture, which the Spirit opens and explains to the mind by his fecret illuminations, in answer to the soul's inquiry, search, and prayer; making it plainer and plainer; shewing the suitableness of it to God's glory, and the foul's necessities; answering and filencing objections to the truth of it, and gaining a belief of it in the foul upon the authority of a taithful God, who cannot lie, and will not change. The testimony here is as immediately and directly God's, as a man's testimony to what he declares is his.— And this God's testimony is not made out by any new revelation to the foul (that being merely an enthufiaftical fancy, and a very dangerous opinion) but by casting light upon the promile, explaining it, and making it out in the mind by a rational discovery of the evidences upon which it stands, as they lie in the scripture. Upon this follows, in the fourth place, the assent, which is always in proportion to the degree of clearness wherewith the divine testimony is made in the soul. But wherever it is gained in any degree, it is saving, having the very same effects in kind, though not in degree, as when it is grown up to absolute assurance past all doubt; and particularly warring against the fear of God's wrath, from a sense of guilt and unworthiness, which is the most proper office and business of faith. Having shewn you now what the true nature of faith is, I would observe,

6. That according to the account given of it, it must needs admit of the division into weak and strong. The belief is in proportion to the testimony, which the Spirit may give with a convincing fullness all at once, if he pleases, as it look as if he did in the case of St. Paul: but it appears by the Bereans, that this is not always the case; for it is said of them, that they fearched the scriptures daily whether these things were for whereby it is manifeltly implied, that God's testimony was not given them all at once, in its fatisfying fulnefs and incontestible evidence. And experience shews that this is ordinarily the case, as is most reasonable it should, to excite our care, diligence, prayer, and meditation for increase in this great gift of God. God's testimony lies in the scripture, to which we cannot affent any farther than we know it. But this fcripturetestimony is of large extent and scope, in a competent knowledge of all which the mind must be instructed, before it can attain unto fuch an affent as will admit of no doubt. although it be the Spirit that makes out this scripture-testimony, yet there is no reason to expect he will do it, but increafingly, in correspondence with our fearching the scriptures, and in answer to our prayers.

And therefore to conclude, let me address a word of advice

for the increase of faith.

First, We should be abundantly diligent in humbling ourfelves before God for our manifold and daily sins and provocations; this is our duty; but the effect of it, in regard of increase of faith, is manifest, inasmuch as such exercises keep the soul awake to see its real vileness and utter want of Christ, and thereby preserve and increase its longings and desires after

hun,

him. This experience teaches; as we remit or are diligent in

these exercises, we are cold or earnest after Christ.

Secondly. We must here read, and meditate on the scriptures, in a dependence on divine illumination to make out to us from them more evidently God's testimony concerning his Son Jesus Christ. God's word must be our study as often as we can, and when it is not, we must be recollecting what we have learnt from it, and pondering upon it on all occasions; else, as I may say, we do not give the Spirit opportunity to

explain, and fix on our minds the testimony of God.

Thirdly, We must use the faith we have. This is a special means of increase. Behold he giveth more grace. Stir up your faith to oppose all sinful fears; keep it in exercise upon God, as he appears in his glorious majesty and mercy in Jesus Christ. Lose not the sight of the great Redeemer, seated as he now is, at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and manifested as he will soon be, in the clouds of heaven. Let your faith in the divine promises, such as it is, be constantly kept at work in opposing the whole body of sin, and the special lusts thereof. Stir yourself up unto every duty. See that faith have the chief place in all you do, and in all your approaches unto God. See that your faith be working, and

you will find God giving you increase.

Lastly, Be thankfully observant of God's faithfulness to his promises in Jesus Christ, manifest in his gracious daily dealings with you in foul and body. Compare his dealings with his declarations. Through grace it will wonderfully confirm you to fee how they agree. How, as he has faid, he hears your prayers; does not fuffer you to be tempted above that you are able; heals your backslidings; corrects you in meafure; comforts you in all your tribulations. O my friends, to fee by long experience from of old, how he has carried us in his hand, and still to this day has not left nor forfaken us; how through his mercies we are not confumed, and still his compassions fail not; to see how his mercies are new to us every morning; and every day he bleffes us according to his word, in body, that we live and have health, and every thing needful, and every thing convenient, and every comfortable thing, as it is this day; in foul he keeps us, preventing us with gracious motions, upholding us against our enemies, ftirstirring us up to good, and preserving us from sin. What shall we say to these things? Were the mercies of God but one day duly remembered, how should we be forced to own the faithfulness of God, and the merits of Jesus Christ! The Lord enable you so to do, to the increase of your faith and joy, and of his praise and glory through Jesus Christ.

# SERMON VIII.

Acrs xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

and it was feen to be believing upon divine testimony, which testimony lies in the holy scriptures, and is made out from them by the Spirit.

I am now to speak of the object of this divine faith, which is God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And at present more generally of the divine nature, I believe in God. And

here we must inquire,

I. What God is.

II. What it is to believe in him.

I. What God is. God is a Spirit. I have no comprehenfion of what I fay, when I call God a Spirit, because I am
quite a stranger to the nature of a spirit; but when I say,
God is a Spirit, I mean hereby that he is quite contrary to
body, that he has neither eyes, nor hands, nor other bodily
members, like myself; but that he is something to which my
reasonable soul is not absolutely unlike, of which I know that
it has certain powers of understanding and willing, though I
have not the least notion what the substance of it is. This
Spirit is a living Spirit, all creatures, whether spiritual or visible, have their life from other, even from him; he has his
life from none. I am, is his name: he hath life in himself;
and all creatures in heaven, hell, and earth, as at first they
received their life from him, so every moment do they live
and substit by him. God is life in himself, and therefore life

in all. The living Spirit is infinite; he is not limited by place or time, as creatures are, who can only be at one certain place, and who subsist by succession of time. Of them all it must be said, they are here in this place, and nowhere else; they had at fuch a time a beginning, still they are, and the future, when it comes, shall make addition to their days :-But of God it is faid, he is everywhere at once, yet not a part of him here, and another part of him ten millions of miles on the other fide the fun, but inconceivably werywhere at once in his whole effence. The heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him. As also it must be faid of God, He is eternal; he knows neither beginning nor end; neither past, nor to come. Time is no measure of his existence; he was, or he will be, cannot be applied to his life. There is no conceiving the manner of his existing, nor hardly power in language to express what it is not. He lives without succesfion, and therefore, were it not improper to apply terms expressive of time to his life, you might invert the order of past and to come, and as well fay, he will be from everlasting, he hath been to everlasting, as he hath been and will be, since time is not the measure of his being. He is Almighty; he can do what he pleases: He hath done whatever is. With him the power is as eafy as the will. What he wills he does, and that without the least difficulty, even as if to will and to do were the fame act. When he faid in his heart, Let worlds be; all came forth into being with infinitely greater ease than you move your finger. When he wills again, heaven and earth, with all their furniture, shall pass away: And at a third command, a new heaven and a new earth shall rife up in their place. He is bleffed; infinitely happy in himfelf, incapable of addition or diminution to his happiness. The malice or mifery of devils do not take from, the glory and fervices of angels do not add to, his happiness. Considered in his moral character, as governing the world, he is holy, just, and good. All his commands are holy and right, resulting not from an arbitrary exercise of power, but from his own excellency and fupremacy, and our dependence upon him. All his dispenfations are just and equal; there is no unrighteousness in any thing that he does; they who ferve him shall not be forfaken by him, and they who suffer have but their deserts. Both his commands and his dispensations display his goodness and No. 1. goodgood-will towards us, as the one and the other tend to the happiness of his creatures. To obey his orders is liberty, to enjoy his favour is life. His afflictions are calculated to reclaim, his greatest judgments are fuited to warn others; and feeing fin and mifery are inseparable, his greatest judgments, those that are eternal, have a tendency to the general good of his subjects, by forcing some to return from their evil ways, lest they perish after the example of others. Finally, God is unchangeable. Respecting his natural perfections, he must be fo by the excellency and necessity of his nature; he cannot cease from being a living, omnipresent, eternal, almighty, bleffed God, without ceafing to be God. And, in his moral character, he is incapable of change, because of his infinite wisdom, whereby he adjusts all things at once by weight and measure, without possibility of mistake, or need of alteration. His determinations are ordered in all things and fure, and therefore they stand fast for ever. Let this suffice for the first point, What God is.

II. What it is to believe in him. There is a wide difference between believing that God is, and believing in him.— The latter includes (which the former does not) a proper disposition of the heart towards him as God. Angels in heaven believe that God is, and also believe in him by a right disposition of heart towards him. So did Adam in innocence.— But devils, though they believe God is, yet have no belief in him; and the sons of men, in the sinful state into which we are fallen, though they should believe God to be every thing that he is, yet cannot believe in him, but in that peculiar way by which he offers himself to them as their God. For the explaining of this, three things must be observed, as being implied in this first article of Christian faith, "I believe in God."

1. It implies a believing God to be what he is. For it is impossible to be disposed to God in love, trust, and service, or, which is the same thing, to believe in him, any farther than he is believed to be that excellent Being who has a right to our hearts, and by his all-sufficiency is able to support the claim he makes upon our affections. He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of all them that diligently seek him. Where, although it is manifest, that believing that such a Being as God is can have no influence to engage and encourage us sinners to come unto him, unless also

we believe, that he is a gracious rewarder of those who feek him; yet on the other hand, believing that God is the Being that he is, is the necessary foundation of the other; since it is only in proportion to that, that either his judgments or rewards can have any influence upon us So that manifeftly to believe in God, implies a believing that he is what he is.— Now it is evident, that the most of men, in fact, and it is certain all men by nature, do not believe God to be what he is; living incontestibly without him in the world; his being, perfection, and majesty, not having the least practical influence upon them, which plainly shews that they have not in them any real belief that God is fuch a being as he is. Devils believe, and in confequence therefore tremble; but they who lie dead in trespasses and fins, utterly unawakened and unconcerned about their state, are absolutely atheists; for they tremble not, and yet as well as devils would tremble, did they believe that God is the Being that he is, and in common with them they must tremble sooner or later, when they shall be made to know that there is a God that judgeth the earth. But for the present, their hearts are so engaged by the things of the world, and their eyes are fo blinded by the god of the world, that there is no belief in them that fuch a Being as God is. But how is this, when it is fo commonly faid, there is no fuch thing as an atheist in the world, and in proof of that, it is alledged, that the most hardened sinner in it is afraid of death? My answer is. May not a man be afraid of death, without having any fear of God? But it is urged farther, he is afraid too of what comes after death. This I greatly question, and almost venture to deny, if the man has never been awakened I am fensible that the traditionary knowledge there is of God left in the world, and handed down from one to another, is fufficient to raise suspicions, and to beget a doubtful apprehension in the foresight of death upon the minds of those who do not believe in reality that God is what he is; as also, I am sensible, that this traditionary knowledge is capable of being fo reasoned upon by learned men, as to produce in them a feemingly strong affent to the truth of God's being and perfections; the reality of which I must question, since it begets in them no fear of God, or at least no other than is common to them with others, a superstitious fear, grounded on the vulgar opinion that there is a God: but this fear of death or judgment can by no means

prove that a man really believes God to be what he is, when his hardness, obstinacy, and wilfulness, so evidently prove the contrary; it being, I conceive, unquestionable, that what we really believe we are necessarily affected by, in proportion to the importance which that truth is of unto us: confequently they who are not moved by fear to feek after the falvation of their fouls, have no real belief that God is what he is, though, through the opinion concerning him that prevails in the world, they may be unable to deny it, and so may not be without their apprehensions. There is need therefore of a divine illumination to induce a man to believe that God is what he is. And when from the works of nature or providence, the being and perfections of God are made out in the heart, and a firm affent is gained, then the finner fees God indeed; but at first he sees him as a consuming fire. What comfort can he take in an everlasting, almighty, omnipresent enemy? Were God his friend, what could equal his happiness? To be kept by an Almighty Arm, to be guided by unerring wifdom, to stand in the favour of divine majesty and absolute fufficiency; this were glorious! But to look upon him as an enemy and avenger! In this view, every infinite perfection of God makes the wretchedness so much more abundantly deplorable. But out of this state of distress our professor is supposed to be passed. He says, 'I believe that God is every thing that he is,' not with the terror of a flave, but with the comfort of a child, who regards what is his Father's, as having an interest therein. 'I believe that God is; that he liveth omnipresent and eternal; that his power is boundless; that he is holy, just, and good; and my joy it is, that he is what he is, though I have finned against him, and have deferved his indignation. Now I can look upon him with de-· light in all his perfectness, and because he is all-perfect; in his perfection lies all my fafety and all my happiness." short, though a real belief that God (apprehended according to the truth of his being) namely, just and righteous, is, fills the awakened foul with fear, yet when the belief of God's mercy in Jesus Christ is added thereunto, it fills the believing foul with comfort. And therefore,

2. In this article, "I believe in God," is implied a belief of the gospel, that God is reconciled in Jesus Christ. And this is what makes the belief of God an article of Christian faith.

faith. Without a Mediator there is a great impaffable gulph between a holy Governor of the world and a rebellious creature. God stands off on one side, and man dares not draw near on the other. But when Jesus comes in between, the breach is healed, the intercourse is opened; God offers himfelf to the finner, and he, encouraged by the promise, and laying hold on the righteousness of Christ, says unto the Lord, Thou art my God. Whatever belief any one may have of God, that he is every thing glorious, excellent, and defirable, yet confidering him abfolutely, he not only may not, but even he dares not, come near him with confidence; fin, guilt, and the curse of the law forbid. It is to a covenant God only that there is access; it is through Christ only that we come unto the Father. If any presume to come otherwise, they have no command or other warrant to bear them out; they come in ignorant and arrogant fecurity, not fensible that they are finful, guilty, and miferable creatures; and let them not think (whatever their confidence be) that they are accepted of God. Indeed, unless inexpressibly deluded, they can have no confidence in God. His terrors will make them afraid, because they have that within them which tells them they are finners, and is continually crying out, How canst thou stand before this holy Lord God? But not to infift on this, the Article before us is Christian, stands at the head of all the articles of our most holy faith, is the key unto, and the substance of them all; and therefore must needs have reference unto Christ, as that only Saviour by and through whom we believe in God.

3. "I believe in God" not only implies our believing that God is what he is; and again, our believing that he is reconciled in Chrift, but also our accepting him as he presents himfelf to us in Chrift, to be a God unto us. Now this acceptance contains two things, (1.) A taking of God to save and bless us according to the gospel. To save us, in Christ, from all our enemies; the curse of the law; the power of sin, the world, and the devil; the power of death, and the power of hell. And to bless us in the same Jesus Christ, by being at perfect peace with us; taking us to be his children; granting us his favour; comforting us in all our troubles; making us grow in grace; keeping us in death; receiving our departing souls; raising our mortal bodies; and causing us everlastingly

to behold his face in the world to come. This is an act of faith, the betrufting the foul unto od the Saviour, upon a belief of his all-fusficiency, and of his fure mercy in Jefus Christ. And herein we do evidently renounce any pretence of righteousness in ourselves, as well as all hope of happiness in the creature, laying up all our hope and happiness in a covenant God. (2.) A taking of God to rule over us according to the gospel; that is, to rule over us according to his revealed will, by the power of his Spirit, wherein we renounce our own wisdom, submitting to his word; our own strength, subjecting ourselves to the guidance of his grace; and our own will, yielding ourselves up intirely unto his. This is the surrender of ourselves unto God to be a Lord and Master unto And in these two things lie our acceptance of God to be our God, according to the offer that he makes of himfelf in Jefus Chrift. In short, to believe in God, is to believe that he is what he is, that is, what he hath revealed himself to be; to believe that, having reconciled the world unto himself by Tesus Christ, he offers himself to be a God unto us; and to declare our acceptance of this offer by betrufting ourselves unto him, and furrendering up our whole felves to his fervice.

From the whole it appears, that when any one fays, "I be-"lieve in God," according to the true design and meaning of the Article, his intention is to declare, 'I believe there is one 6 God, though subfifting in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Choft who, I fledfaitly am affored, is a most glorious Spirit; that liveth of himfelf alone, being the life of all creatures; neither limited by place or time, but infinitely filling all things, and fubfifting from everlafting to everlafting; his power without bounds, and his bleffedness incapable of addition or diminution; the governor of the world, and in every respect qualified to be so, being unspottedly upright in all his commandments, just and equal in all his difpenfations, and good in all his dealings; unchangeable, because incapable of mistake, as infinitely wise to order all things, and who cannot fail for ever in his nature or will.— I do confess that I have most finfully departed from the government of this my rightful King, and that for the same I am deferving he should never look upon me; but seeing he has fent his only begotten Son into the world to fave finners, and has commanded me to believe in his name, I do folemn-

Iy declare, that I have no hope towards God but through · Jefus Chrift, in whom, and for whose fake I desire always to believe God is reconciled to me, to the alone glory of grace. I publish this as the sole ground of my confidence towards God, and would have you all take notice, that I do most cordially join with you in our common and professed faith towards God through Jefus Christ our Lord only; in whom, I do hereby folemnly declare, that I have taken, and do take God, according to his most condescending offer, to be my God, to pardon and accept, to fanctify, defend, and keep me to his use while I live, and to glorify me after this life, and this without any known refervation, and in a willing renunciation of all idols. In the full force and meaning of all which things, I now fay in the presence of vou all, and call upon you all to bear witness to this my declaration, I believe in God.'

And now, brethren, I may ask, Have you understood these things? If you have, I must say unto you, happy are you, if you do them. For it was just now faid, that this first Article is the substance of all the Creed; so that if you truly say,-"I believe in God," then God is your God, you have God the Father for your Father, God the Son for your Redeemer, and God the Holy Ghost for your Comforter. And if God be your God, then of course all things are yours; life, death, things present, and things to come, are yours; you are a true member of Christ's body the church, are in the communion of faints, your fins are forgiver you, and the refurrection of the body and the life everlaking wait for you. In a word, the grace of our Lord Tefus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, are actually and always with you, And is all the nothing? Be fensible, I befeech you, of the noble honer and high privilege you are exalted to.-Confider from whence you were taken, what you were, and whither you were going; be attentive to the now happy difference. Now did you once think of God, with what hatred! with what terror! and now to behold the bleffed object of your heart smiling upon you, O what a difference! What a forlorn creature once were you, uncomfortable amidstall the comforts of life, and O how uncomfortable in the day of your affliction! But now, what a refuge you have in God E A under

under all your troubles; what a calm within in the most tempettuous feafons; what a peace passing all understanding in all your tribulations, while you look up and fee it is your loving Father, your eternal Guide, your almighty Friend, that appoints and orders every affliction; while you look up and fee his countenance befpeaking all love, while you look up and hear him fay, It is i, be not afraid! Happy, happy difference! How you once trembled at death; were filled with horror in the prospect of judgment, and looked upon heaven without hope! 'Alas, you faid in the anguish of your heart, heaven is not my home, I have no part in the bleffed inheritance of the faints; hell, hell, I fear, is my portion; ! I shall be cast into the bottomless pit, and howl through the ages of eternity from amidst the fire that shall never be quenched. But now God is my God. Jesus died for ne; Iefus has interceded and prevailed; the eternal, almighty, \* living God permits me to call him Father; he hath taken • me among his children; he hath given me the spirit of a child, and I love him; I call him my Father, and he answers me: I cast all my care upon him, and he careth for me; he doth not, he will not leave nor forfake me, he is mine for ever and ever. I shall see his face; shall live at his right hand; I shall come with singing, and everlasting joy shall be upon my head. How is the bitterness of death passed! What is become of the King of Terrors? How is his vifage changed! Bleffed meffenger of heaven, to bring me home to my God! Where is thy fling? And how are the wonted horrors of the judgment day vanished! I shall meet my Lord in the air, I shall be for ever with my God.' There were no end of displaying the difference there now is between the state of him who is alive from the dead, in comparison of what he was in the days of his unbelief.

And what, will none of these things move the unbeliever? That unhappy soul, who lies before God as often as he says, I believe in God, neither believing that God is what he is, nor believing in Jesus Christ as the only Mediator between God and man, nor accepting God to be his God; but notwithstanding all these outward professions of believing in God, yielding himself daily to sin, and resusing God and his service: Will none of these things move him? My dear brother,

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what the believer once was, all that you still are, unpardoned, unholy, unhappy, hopeless, trembling at death. What, do not you tremble at death? No: What, do you defy death? Do you say to him "Come on, here am I, ready to meet "thee; come now, come this night, while I fleep, this night "come and take me?" What, can you fay fo? Alas, I know you do not like to hear of that ugly word death. The very word makes you uneafy. You would be glad I should mention it no more. Death, death, death and damnation; you have been often angry with me in your hearts, for using fuch terrifying words. What, will the man never have done? Must we never hear of any thing else but hell and damnation? You have been angry with me for this, you know you have. And why fo? Was it because I did any thing amis, any thing contrary to duty, or contrary to charity, in telling you of these things? or was it not solely because you were made uneasy by the hearing them? Ah, there lies the truth of the matter. Had you thought your state good, you had not been a jot displeased with my utmost freedom; but your conscience was against you; and so it is now; it is pressing home upon you this moment, and forcing you to fay, 'I know I am in that very state he has been just describing the believer to have been formerly in. He has been speaking the plain truth of my case; as he says, I am neither easy nor happy. It is true enough, I am dreadfully afraid of death, and horribly afraid of judgment; and if he had faid farther, that I wish I were in the condition of that believer he has been speaking of, he would not have said a word more than is true; for I should think myself the happiest man in the world to be in the state that he is. But then he does not know what trials, and troubles, and difficulties are in my way. I would do fomething, but how can I? Were he in my place, he would speak another language.' Why, my dear friend, bear witness for me, did I ever say, either you I, or any one, could go to heaven without difficulties and troubles? And yet I would needs have you go thither; I would not have the severest trials, the most formidable difficulties to hinder you, because I am sure heaven would make you amends for all. In short, all that I have faid is but what you knew if I had, never faid it, and which you knew

to be so true, that you would have counted me a liar if I had said otherwise; for the sum of all that I have said is, that if you do not believe and leave your sins, you cannot be saved. Here lies the plain truth, and I earnestly pray God to stir you up to the consideration and practice of it. For, O! how happy should I be to see you all in heaven? Believe me, I do not give one of you over. And I must and will be seech you, every soul, to lay hold on everlasting life, while I have yet the power of begging any savour of you. Return, return, my dear brethren, why will ye die? Ah! cease not, give not yourselves rest day nor night, until you can truly say, I believe in Ged.

# SERMON IX.

#### Acts xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be suved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

FTER having shewn you the nature of divine faith, I proceeded to set before you the object thereof, to wit, God in Christ, as expressed in the first words of the Creed, I believe in God. We must now go on to explain more at large, what is included in these introductory words. And this is the doctrine of the three Persons in the divine nature, distinguished by the relation they bear to each other, and by their respective offices towards us, together with the happy effects on our parts, resulting from our true belief in this Tri-

nity.

Though there is but one God, yet the scripture teaches us to own three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, subsisting inconceivably together in the divine nature; as is sufficiently manifest by the form of baptism, and by the apostolical benediction as well as by a large variety of scriptures, which declare this great mystery with incontestable plainness to the humble and unprejudiced mind. Wherefore we are taught by our church to 'worship one God in Trinity, and 'Trinity in unity, neither consounding the persons, nor dividing the substance.' Whereby is understood, that God is the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and again, that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, are one God. Concerning which it is needful to observe, that there is both an union, and a distinction in the Godhead. The union is, that the Three Persons are one in nature, one in the same undivided

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Godhead; that is, 'though the Father be God, the Son God, 'and the Holy Ghost God, yet they are not three distinct 'Gods,' neither have they three different or separate parts of the Godhead, but one with another, and one in another, they are one and the same God. Nevertheless, although not separated and divided, yet are they distinguished; the Father is not the Son nor the Holy Ghost, neither is the Son the Father or the Holy Ghost, nor the Holy Ghost the Father or the Son. They subsist distinctly, though undividedly in the same Godhead, 'the whole Three Persons co-eternal, together, and co-equal.'

In speaking of the Three Persons in the divine nature, we are to consider the relation they bear to each other, and their

respective offices towards us.

The first person in the Godhead is the Father.

Now Father being a relative term, hath reference to a Son, without which there could not be a Father. The property of the first person, considered as subsisting in the Godhead, is to beget, to wit, the second person, who is therefore called the Son. When you read in scripture of the Father's begetting the Son, you must not conceive thereof as you do of one creature's begetting another, for there is an utter difference.—Creatures beget their offspring in time, the Father the Son from eternity. The Father begets the Son by communicating to him his whole essence; which cannot be done by creatures, because so they would be themselves reduced to nothing.—When the Father begets the Son, that Son is not a Being separate from the Father, as is the case in all other generation, but they subsist together in the same undivided essence.

Thus you fee what relation the first person bears to the second, and for what reason he is most eminently intitled the Father. But because of this relation he bears to the Son, who hath assumed our nature that he might redeem us, the Father also is the Father of those who believe in the name of his only-begotten Son. For although God be in one sense the Father of us all, inasmuch as we are made by him, yet that peculiar interest in him which is implied in the title, Father, we forseited by sin, and it is only restored to us by grace, so that he is the Father of those only who believe. And to all these he is a Father, for as many as received him (Christ) to them gave he

power to become the Sons of God.

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The meaning of the words therefore is, 'I believe in God the Father of our Lord Jefus Christ, as my Father in him.'—

Wherein these several things are implied.

First, And principally, A profession of faith. I believe that God the Father is a Father in Christ Jesus to all them that believe, and my Father in particular. The Creed is our confession of the assured and stedfast belief we have of the truth of the gospel, that is, of God as he has manifested himself in mercy unto us by Jefus Christ. Consequently to say, I believe in the Father, is to fay I believe that he is reconciled, no longer a confuming God, but an affectionate parent unto his Church, in and for the fake of his dear Son. Now do we believe this? Are we fully and unquestionably persuaded, that when the fulness of time was come, God fent forth his Son made of a woman, that we might receive the adoption of fons? That notwithstanding our guilt. and the curse of the Law, yet coming humbly to God, and pleading the merits of fefus Christ, God actually receives us? As far as we fail here, it is manifest we come short of a full belief of the fufficiency of the gospel-method of falvation.-But as far as we are stedfast herein, that God is the Father of all them that believe, we shall also believe that he is our Father too in particular, confessing our fins, and coming to him by Jesus Christ. It is true, if we do not confess our fins, and come to God in his own way, he is no Father to us. But then it is not less certain, that if we do confess our fins, and humbly fue for his mercy in Christ, he is actually our Father; and if so doing we yet do not believe him to be our Father, the real reason of it is, that we do not stedsastly, as we ought, believe the reconciliation that is in Christ Jesus, and that, for his fake, God is a Father to the Lord's people. It is an artifice, I suppose, of the Devil, to get a charge of prefumption to be laid upon any that shall think God to be reconciled to them, and their Father. And what makes me the rather suspect his hand to be in it, is, that this false notion, covered over with a shew of humility, does secretly strike at the fufficiency of gospel-falvation, the truth of God's promiles, the comfort and growth of God's people. The faith of God's Church is, "I acknowledge God to be the Father of all them that believe." And shall it then be said, it is prefumption for any man to apply this personally and particularly to himself? Should any one say, I do indeed believe that God is a Father to his Church, but I am a vile unworthy sinner, how

how can he be my Father? Let fuch an one know, that he does not stedfastly, as he imagines he does, believe, that God in Christ is reconciled, and a Father to his church; and that in reality his want of a particular faith respecting himself is owing to a defect in his general faith concerning the church. I do not fay, that God is not a Father to such, because I am told the contrary; none that come are cast out, though they come trembling. Have they but fo much faith as engages them to come, they are received. But then this does not afford a proof that there is no fin in fuch misbelief, and doubting fuspicion of the gospel declarations. It is very dishonourable to God's mercy, truth, wildom and justice, let forth to our faith in the gospel. And every one that confesses with his mouth, "I believe in God the Father," ought at the fame time to be able to fay in his heart, I believe he is actually the Father of all that believe, and, feeing this is the faith which I therefore confess, because I rest my own soul upon it, I believe him to be my Father also. Let us not seek excuses for the great fin of unbelief, but confessing our fins, let us pray that we may stedfastly believe God's promises, that he is faithful and just to forgive us our fins, and is a Father unto us for his Son Jesus Christ's fake, to the glory of his grace, and to the comfort and establishment of our fouls.

Secondly, "I believe in the Father," implies a childlike confidence. I look upon God as a Father, and as fuch I have confidence in him. Ye have not received the pirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The spirit under the law was ministred according to the peculiar defign of that dispensation, which was to be a Schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. And what there was in that dispensation suited to beget bondage and fear, the apostle tells us, when he fays, 'Te are not,' now under the christian dispensation, ' come unto the mount that might not be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness and darke ness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, which voice they that heard, intreated that the word should onot be spoken to them any more; (for they sould not endure that which is commanded, and if so much as a beast touch the mountain, in shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart ) And so terrible was the fight, that Moles said, I ex eedingly fear and quake." Now, fays he, out of this dispensation ye are passed, ye have not received again the spirit of bondage to fear. Under the gospel

6 child

gospel all breathes love, and suitably therewith the spirit is ministred as a spirit of adoption, whereby with the confidence of children we call God Father. Confidence in God becomes this last and fullest publication of the gospel by the Son of God in person. Hereof the believer speaking in the Creed is supposed to be sensible, and to profess his belief, that God is his Father, with the confidence of a child. Be fenfible then of your privilege, ye that believe in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ; cast away your fears, that are dishonourable to a God that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; ftrive earnestly for the spirit of children, that, in a manner becoming the gospel of his Son, ye may ferve God without fear. Hear what he fays, Come out from among them, and be ye separate; now this call you have complied with, as many as are joined to the Lord. Then it follows, speaking to you, I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. We difgrace the free and rich love of God. and the infinite merit of the Redeemer's righteoufness and blood, as far as we come short of walking with God in the humble confidence of children. Let the believer therefore remember, that he no more a fervant, but a fon, and pray for that spirit of faith which shall enable him to fay, "I believe in God the Father," with that joyful confidence which the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ not only warrants but requires, and which the person here confessing his faith in God is supposed to be possessed of.

Thirdly, "I believe in the Father," implies a childlike disposition towards God. I own God to be my Father, and I profess myself to be his Son, ready to pay him all dutiful and childlike obedience. It is the sure proof of our relation to God as a Father, that we have the spirit of children wrought in us; a spirit of love, and of a ready mind to do the will of God.—They that are God's children have some measure of the Spirit of Jesus their elder Brother, whose meat and drink it was to do the will of him that sent him, without murmuring at any of his orders, or thinking his commandments grievous. The grief of a true child of God is that he should sin against him, and thereby dishonour and displease him; his greatest lamentation is over that body of sin which lurks in his members, and suffers him not to be that dutiful child he would be. 'I believe God to be my Father,' he fays, 'and I regard myself as his

child, chearfully to fubject myself unto his holy will in all things. O how love I thy law! all the day long is my fludy in it. Take notice, all ye that hear me, while I fay these words, · I believe in God the Father, I think myself obliged by every tie of duty and gratitude, and I am fully and gladly determined to keep the commandments of my God.' And if we cannot fay this in the fincerity of our hearts; if God's commandments are hated or despised by us, and we will not walk in them; where is there even the spirit of a fervant? But should we endeavour to keep them while it is merely through fear of punishment, and are only restrained from sin, left it should bring us to ruin, and forced upon duties, because otherwise we cannot be easy, where is the spirit of children? It is plain, that the most of those who call themselves Christians, are living in a flat contrariety to the temper and conduct of one truly believing in God as a Father; and it is not less manifest, that there are many of those that may well enough be termed ferious people, who, through want of deep humbleness of mind, and from a degree of ignorance respecting the freedom of gospel-salvation, and the privileges that belong to it, are ferving God more like flaves than children. It is in an increasing knowledge of God's free love to us in Jesus Christ, and in a growing confidence in him as our Father, that we become followers of God as dear and obedient children, not fashioning ourselves according to the former lusts in our ignorance, but ready to every good word and work.

Lastly, To believe in God as a Father, implies a readiness to fubmit to all his disposals of, and dispensations towards us. Is God my Father? Then he loves me. This is indifputable And is my Father infinitely wife? then he cannot mistake in his management of me. Therefore I say, let him have the whole direction of me; else I should not truly believe in him as my Father. Let him provide for me as he sees best; and Shether the provision he allots me be more or less, it is the portion he gives me, and I will be content. If he takes from it, I will not complain, because I know him to be a loving Father. If he corrects me, shall I murmur against him? This were to fuspect his Fatherly love. Foolishness, I know, is bound in my heart, and the rod of correction must drive it far from me. When I call God my Father, I declare an implicit and reverent submission to all his disposals. In all our possessions, and

in all our afflictions, to fanctify the Lord God in our hearts, is an eminent branch of believing in God as our Father. If we are diffatisfied with his allotment of the things of the world unto us, if we murmur under his corrections, how can we believe him to have the bowels of a Father, how do we treat him in correspondence with what we profes? Really to believe in God as our Father, you see goes into the dispensations and troubles, as well as the duties of every day. Father, if it be possible elet this cup pass away from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine be done. Behold there the true spirit of a child.

By this time you may fee fomething of the true fense and meaning of this word, I believe in God the Father, and that whoever fays it according to the full intention thereof, as a point of Christian faith, doth thereby declare, 'I believe that the Father is in a peculiar fense so intitled, as bearing the relation of a Father to his only-begotten Son; but I believe also, that in and for the sake of that only-begotten Son, mainifest in the flesh, he is a Father to all those among the fal-· len race of mankind, who believe in the name of his Son Iefus Christ. As one of that happy number, I glory in him as my Father, and with the whole church do profess my · humble but affured confidence in him, in the delightful character of their and my Father. As fuch I defire and determine to honour and reverence him, delighting to do his will, whatever it be and in all things to submit to his Fatherly guidance, without hypocrify, partiality, disputing, or complaining; in every thing willing to approve myself the child of this my heavenly Father, to his glory, and to my · peace and happiness.'

And now what fay we? Do we thus believe in God the Father? No; the most are not thus related to him. Their confciences and their lives proclaim they are not. What, do they believe God to be their Father; and do they rejoice in him as their God? Should they fancy they do these things, yet do they walk with him as dear children, and submit to his providential disposals with a childlike quietness and thankfulness? Here at least they see themselves wanting; they are self-willed, disobedient, impatient, and distaished. I hey live according to their own humour, and will, as far as they can, have every thing after their own mind. I heir whole pretensions to faith amount only to this, to say they believe in No. 2.

God the Father, to call themselves his fervants, to come into his house, and to stand up and repeat the Creed without any defign or meaning; if these things will serve the turn, they are believers as good as the best. But if you expect any thing else from them, if you will have them humble themfelves for their apostate nature, and their sinful practices, come to God by Jefus Christ in earnest and importunate prayer for mercy, befeeching him, as for their lives, that he will take them into his favour, and be a Father unto them; if you expect they should esteem it their greatest happiness to have God for their Father, and that they diligently feek to obtain a warrantable persuasion that he is so; if you look that they manifest their relation to God by all kinds of good works, and by behaving in fuch a manner as to glorify God; if you are expecting any thing of this from them, they will be excufed from a faith fo troublesome and felf-denying. And what can we say to such? If they will not be persuaded to fuch a faith, what can we do? If they will refuse the glorious liberty of being God's children, what besides can we offer them? If they will neither be influenced by the dignity and honour of fuch a relation, nor have regard to the noble privileges that attend it, in having the eternal God to hear all their prayers, to pity all their infirmities, to supply all their wants, to support and comfort them in life, death, and glory, what more can we do but be forry and pray for them? Unhappy creatures! They let pass the golden opportunity that can never be recovered; they fuffer the day of falvation to fet upon them, that never, never shall rife again! O how will they wish in a very little time, when it is too late, that God was their Father! when the day of judgment appears in its awful terrors, how will they then wish that God was their Father!

But a word to others. You do not think I have carried the matter too far, by stating so high as I have done, believing in God the Father. The truth is, your duty and happiness go together; and I wish rather to bring you up to your duty, than to lower that to your standard. Should I have said less than I have, it would have been doing you a sensible injury; for did you thus believe in God, would you not be more happy and more holy? And I leave you to judge whether I have advanced any thing, which the promises of God will not

authorise, and the duty of believing demand.

I take

I take my leave of the whole, with one word to those whose eyes are now opening upon spiritual things, and see themfelves encompassed for the present with a variety of difficulty. To fuch I fay, how delightful and encouraging is the prospect before you, in the adoption of children! How would ye rejoice, my dear friends, could ye fay, ' God is our Father; he is ours, and we are his! The almighty living God is mine; he that liveth for evermore is mine. Mine to love me, blefs e me, comfort me, keep me, glorify me! He is my Father, even mine!' Would not this make you happy? And fee the Only-begotten stands in your nature, with opened arms to receive and introduce you to his Father and your Father, to his God and your God. O how fure will your title then be to the adoption of a child! See, the word, even that word which will not pass away when heaven and earth are gone, is before you to teach and direct you. See, the Spirit is come knocking at the door of your heart, and foliciting an entrance, that he may bring you to Jesus, and to God in him. How forcibly he pleads! how he fays in your heart, behold here thro' thy life all this fin, and before thee all that damnation-why wilt thou die? Behold Jefus died for the ungodly; hear how he fays, Come to me, and I will give thee rest; behold the Father looks toward thee; it is a look of love; hearken to his gracious voice; 'Come out, and I will be a Father unto thee. and thou shalt be my child.' What encouragement! But is this all? Let all the triumphs of the dying hour speak, let all the glories of the judgment day declare, let all the joys of the everlasting heavens publish, if you be not called to a bleffing indeed, when God invites you to him to become his child. Take courage. Let not Satan terrify, nor man difmay, nor interest insnare, nor pleasure beguile you of God your reward. Keep your eye fixed on the glorious God. How glorious he is! How does his favour make the angels happy!-How happy will you be, when you can fay, I believe in God the Father!

# SERMON X.

## Acts xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

Believe in God the Father" having been confidered, we now pass on to the next word in this first Article of our

Creed, Almighty.

The almightiness of God has reference to his authority an dominion over all things, and also to his all-sufficiency and might to do whatever he pleases. In the latter sense it is to be more distinctly spoken to in the Sixth Article, where the same word returns, 'he sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty.' Here it is to be understood in the former sense, as expressive of God's absolute dominion and authority over all things; to which he has an unquestionable right, as being maker of all things, and for which he is fully qualified, as being endued with a most upright will to order his subjects aright, and with power, knowledge, and the inspection of his own eye, to uphold, restrain, and correct them.

I mean not to take up your time in proving what no one, who believes there is a God, denies. The very devils know and believe God to be the governor of the world. When we fay, 'I believe in God the Father Almighty,' we own the fame truth also, but we own it aright, in a spirit different from them, in a sincere disposition of heart to be subject to his government. This is what makes the article Christian, and gives it a place in our Creed. We own the Father to be Almighty, in a cheerful confession of his rightful dominion over us, and in a willing determination that he shall rule over us. We speak it as they who are returned from their rebel-

lion,

lion, into which all are fallen by the fin of Adam, and as brought back unto the Father, through the mediation and by

the grace of Jefus Christ, his only Son our Saviour

The dominion over all things is here afcribed unto the Father, while in other fcriptures you will find it referred unto the Son. The reason of which is, that although Lordship over all things be in the Son by constitution, and as receiving it from the Father for the special work of mediation, yet the right rests in the Father, who made all things for himself.—And therefore that dominion, which as to the execution of the Father's will is actually and fully in the Son, is nevertheless ultimately in the Father, and therefore here ascribed to him.

The dominion of the Father is an absolute sovereignty over all creatures, with whom he does therefore according to his own pleasure, and without giving account of any of his matters, command, forbid, and dispose of them in all cases. And therefore his dominion implies,

First, His absolute and everlasting empire, whereby he is King of kings, and Lord of lords, sitteth over all from the beginning,

and remaineth a King for ever.

Secondly, And in confequence of this absolute empire, a right of giving laws to his subjects as he pleases, which are to be regarded as the fole rule of their conduct. So what we call virtue and vice, good and evil, do not at all confift in acting up to the supposed obligation arising from the fitness or unfitness of things, according to our estimation of them, but in obedience or disobedience to the supreme will of God. To obey God is virtue, and to disobey him is vice. To do or forbear therefore, because the thing to be done seems fit, or because that which is to be forborn seems otherwise, exclufively of a due regard had to God's authority, however right it may be in itself thus to do or forbear, is no act of religion. There is no doubt that all God's commands are in themselves most right and fit, being constituted upon an infinitely wife plan devised by God himself; but then to do them solely because they are so, not because he commands them, is plainly to lay aside his authority. Yet upon that God insists. He will be obeyed absolutely. He does not subject his laws to our examination in fuch manner, that we shall only do them because we see them right. He expects to be obeyed be-

cause he is God and King. Laying aside this measure of obedience, we subject ourselves to endless dispute and uncertainty, and, in fact, cast away that which can alone influence the conscience. God's will is the law of his subjects; while they have regard to that, as the ground of their obligation to do and forbear, they obey; when they depart from it, fetting up another measure, and searching into the reasonableness of the command to found their obligation thereupon. they affuredly fall into fin. See all this in an instance or two. God faid to Adam, Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt furely die. Here was a plain command of God, resting simply upon his authority, without the least intimation of a reafon why the fruit of this tree was forbidden to be eat. It was the test of Adam's obedience to God's supreme will.-Now what step does Satan take to effect his purpose? He artfully draws away the woman's attention from the obligation arising out of God's authority, by leading her into an inquiry after the design and fitness of the prohibition. The ground of obedience being thus forgotten, he easily reasons her into a persuasion, that it would be far better for her to eat it than forbear. Just so you may find it to have been with yourfelf. While, with never fo good a defign, you have been reasoning about the excellency of any of God's laws, in order to ftir yourfelf up to conformity therewith, and have not laid as your foundation the command and authority of God, which alone has power to bind and influence the conscience, you have found that there was neither weight nor power from all your discoveries to constrain your mind; and however you might judge fuch a conduct fit, you had no ability to practife it. It is the fense of God's sovereign authority which in fact influences to all duties. In the fight of this we can fear because we have done what was forbidden, or take confidence in God through Jesus Christ, because we are doing what is commanded. But should you, without respect to God's authority, fet yourfelf, from the unreasonableness of sin, or the reasonableness of believing, to the practice of godly fear, and exercifing faith, you would certainly find yourfelf both unhumbled and unbelieving; which I doubt not is a common case. Take another instance. God bids Abraham sacrifice Isaac. Had the father of the faithful gone to any other fitness

ness than the fitness of an immediate, absolute, unquestioning obedience to the command of God, he had certainly been overfet, and come short of that conduct which was so eminently pleasing to him. But one and another may be ready to fay, What can we think of fuch a command? Could it be right or fit for a father to facrifice his fon? Is it not contrary to all the notions we have of duty? If the obligations of duty be the fitness of things, according to our judgment of them it is. But if these obligations arise from the mere authority of God, it is just the contrary, and Abraham would certainly have finned, had he withholden his only fon from God. And therefore this instance, with some others in scripture, stands eminently forth in proof, that it is the authority and command of God which is our only rule of judging any thing to be good or evil, and which alone begets obligation of duty. If therefore you shall at any time hear cavils raised against this case of Abraham or others, be upon your guard, and be fensible that they who dispute in this manner, are acting over again the conduct of Satan when he tempted Eve, by endeavouring to take you off from the obligations of duty, as simply arising from the will and command of God, and to bring you to fuch subtle inquiries into the fitness and unfitness of God's commands, as to tend to cast his sovereign authority out of your mind, to make you lofe all fense of his dominion, to leave you in all uncertainty and doubt, effectually to weaken all the bonds of conscience, and set you at liberty to do as you lift, as your corrupted inclinations dispose

Thirdly, It belongs to God's fovereignty to restrain from disobedience by punishment, and to encourage unto submission by promises. The former of these was expressed, and the latter implied in the covenant made with Adam, when God said, In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. To ascertain the measure of these is the prerogative of God, who unquestionably has a right to encourage obedience by rewards insinitely surpassing any excellence there is therein, and who cannot be suspected of punishing sin beyond its desert. You must take heed respecting the one and the other, to have your eye on the sovereignty of God, both that you may not question the title he has given you to glory, because of the vast disproportion there is between it and your worthless fervices.

if you are in a state of obedience; and also may not dispute the equitableness of his declared punishments against you, if you are disobedient, and so screening yourself under the vain hope that he will not punish you at all, remain a rebel. There is indeed no proportion between the fervice we pay God, and the reward prepared for us: but there is doubtless an exact proportion between fin and the punishment threatned against If you cannot deny that the great Sovereign of the universe may dispense the reward because it is great, so do not fet about to persuade yourself he will not inslict the punishment because it is terrible. Beware again here also of making your judgement of what is fit and right the meafure of God's fanctions, lest, as in the former case, you would be reasoned out of all religion, so in this latter you should reason yourself into hell. God knows better than you what fin deferves. Debate not against his determinations As the august Governor of the world he hath decreed the worked hall go away into hell, and all the people that forget God. And can you stop his hand? Will you say to him, What dost thou? When you are perished for ever, will you be able to contend, thou art unrighteous in this which thou haft brought upon me; Let God have his place, and know you yours, which is to obey; but if you will not, to suffer that punishment which he, as your rightful and almighty Sovereign, hath decreed against you. Strange that any should contend against the truth of an eternity of torment, when fallen angels are referved to it; not annihilated, (which is the finner's greatest hope hereafter) but referved unto the judgement of the great day, to be cast into that fire of divine everlasting wrath which is prepared for them. And if eternal torments are certain, can they be unjust? Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? Yes, my brethren, the Lord will be God, he will govern the world, let the finners of hell or earth contend as they please; he will make the one and other know that he judgeth righteously. Lay it to heart, you unwife. You are subject to God's dominion, you know you are. You are rebelling against him; you dare not fay the contrary. And will he yield up his government? Shall not he punish? Behold, he cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity. O how will you be able to abide the day of his coming? The Lord have mercy upon us, and bring us all to repentance, that we experience not what the power and duration of his wrath

wrath shall be. But

Fourthly, God's dominion also takes in his providence. He is not an indolent and unconcerned, but an observant and active governor. He ordereth all things. Hear what the fcripture faith of the kingdom of providence: 'the counsel of the Lord shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure.' See this in his government of the inanimate world. 'He commandeth the fun, and it rifeth not, and he fealeth up all the stars. God thundereth marvelloufly with his voice, he directeth his lightinings unto the ends of the earth. He causeth the vapours to afcend, he bringeth forth the winds out of his treasures. He faith to the fnow, Be thou on the earth. Fire and hail, fnow and vapour, wind and storm, fulfil his word: he turneth them round about with his counfel, that they may do what foever he commandeth them: he causeth them to come, whether for correction or mercy. The Lord giveth rain, the former and latter in his feason, that men may gather in their corn, their wine and their oil: he shutteth up the heavens, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit. He turneth a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.' Well, all this God doth. How fay then the wife men of the world, that there is no fuch thing as a particular providence, fearching into fecond causes for the fprings of all things? But fee it also in the animal world.— Things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. wait upon him, and he giveth them their meat in due feafon: he giveth it them, and they gather it: he openeth his hand, and they are filled with good: he hideth his face, and they are troubled; when he taketh away their breath, they die and return to their dust. He feedeth the fowls of the air, and not a sparrow falleth to the ground without him.' What, is there all this too, and yet no fuch thing as a particular providence! But see it in the government of kingdoms. 'The most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men, and giveth it to whomfoever he will. The Lord increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and straitneth them again; and at what instant he speaketh concerning a nation or a kingdom, to build and to plant it, or to pluck up, and pull down and to destroy it, it shall be done.' See it also in particular persons. 'From him cometh every good and e perfect gift, neither is there any evil in the world, and the Lord hath not done it. He killeth, and he maketh alive.— · He

He numbereth the hairs of our head. Unto God the Lord belong the issues from death: if he gather unto himself the fpirit of man, and his breath, all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust. The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord. · He hideth from the wife and prudent what he revealeth unto babes. He maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. Riches and honour come of him. He maketh the barren woman to be a joyful mother of children. In his hand our breath is, and his are all our ways.' Thus you fee how in the kingdom of providence all things are under God's direction. He ruleth over all, and guideth all things as he pleases. Things great and little are under his care. Nothing comes by chance, and all things, even the most free and voluntary actions, even the deeds of evil men ferve him, and he prefides over all, to make every thing iffue to his glory. We are always for reasoning, always full of presumptuous murmurings, and care not that God should rule over us. We are ready to difavow God's dominion, we are ready to debate his commands, we like not his distributive justice, we would be disengaged from his interfering with the things of the world. This is the way of proud finful man. But it is not the way of our believer. Jesus has taught him a better lesson. And he favs, in correspondence with the whole of God's government, " I believe in God the Father Almighty." And his full meaning is this.

I believe that God the Father holds an absolute, uncontrolable, rightful, and eternal dominion over all creatures both in heaven and earth; and as one of his subjects, however rebellious I have been, yet now, brought back again unto him by Jesus Christ, and emboldened to call him my Father, I do humbly and reverently own his dominion over me;—and I do sincerely desire to regard and respect him as my King, Lord and Master, while I have any being in this world and that which is to come; sincerely purposing by his grace, that no other lord shall ever any more have dominion over me, and yielding myself with the full and free choice of my heart, and with all readiness, gladness, and joyfulness to be his subject, to serve him only, from this moment unto all ages of eternity.—I do heartily consent to his anthority over me, to command me in whatever way he chooses, and I am

determined to do whatever he bids me, and to forbear whatever he shall forbid me to do; respecting, as I do, his command as the only measure of my duty, and as the grand obeligation to my obedience. And I am stedfastly purposed never to dispute his injunctions, be they what they will, but always in a dutiful manner to be fatisfied with them, and according to my power to put them into practice, without gainfaying, and however contrary they may be to my carnal interest or inclinations; being certainly affured that God has an unlimited title to enjoin me whatever he pleases, nor less e persuaded that he cannot command me any thing but what is exactly fittest for his glory and my happiness. - And I do farther declare, that, as I am perfectly fatisfied our Almighty Father has a right to deal with his rebellious subjects in such a manner as he pleases, and as shall best correspond with the honour of his fovereignty, and the ends of his government, 6 fo he both has dealt and will deal with us all in fuch manener, as that both they who ferve him have and shall have infinite reason to adore his mercy and goodness, and they who e perish in their disobedience shall not have the least cause of accusing him of cruelty or injustice. I acknowledge him to be righteous in all that he has brought upon me, and it is of his mercies that I am not confumed. And I am fo far from thinking his present or future judgements severe, that I canonot complain whatever he should do with me, having forfeited all right to his favour by my fins, and am doing fo every day. For which reason I hold it my bounden duty, and what is a debt to his justice and mercy, that I should never murmur under any of his dispensations, that I should receive all his favours as undeferved acts of bounty, and eteral life as his free gift to me in Jesus Christ my Lord. - And finally, feeing I am affured this eternal King my Father actually ordereth, disposeth, and ruleth all things great and little, not only in heaven, but also here upon earth, according to his pleafure, and in fuch a wife and fovereign way as his government over us demands, I do therefore heartily defire to fubmit quietly, thankfully, and observantly, to all his disposals of me in all things and all circumstances; wishing e never to be displeased with any of his dispensations, but to 6 leave myself for life or death, health or sickness, prosperity, or advertity, in all places, times, changes, and conditions, to

to his guidance, and being purposed by his help so to demean myself under all his providential will, as both not to dishonour him, and also to testify to my own conscience and to the world, that I really believe the providence of my God, that I trust upon him as my Father, and submit to him as his servant. And this is what I honestly intend, and sincerely mean, when I make my consession, and say, I believe in God the Father Almighty.

Here you fee, brethren, the faith of a Christian concerning the dominion of God. And you cannot but observe that every tittle of it goes into the practice of the heart and life.

Now could you, as I went along, adopt the confession here read before you? Or if you could not as you wished, yet did you really defire to do fo, and honestly purpose by the grace of God that you would never cease your endeavour of coming nearer and nearer to this temper and conduct of a subject of God? Then I must say, 'Peace be unto you. And I pray that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ.'-But did you find this faith was not in you, that from point to point as we went on, there was a grievous opposition between your temper and that described? That you knew not God's dominion, and were and had been subservient to felfish and worldly aims, standing out in rebellion, and affecting still to be your own mafter, and independent of God in all your views and profpects? That you had not subjected your spirit, soul, and body to God's government, irreverently difregarding his commanding will, or calling the fitness of it in question, or living at your own discretion, and framing a religion from your own head, fuited to your own fancy, and conforming to the will of God fo far only as you pleased? That you could not digest God's distributions of rewards and punishments, being disfatisked that every thing was not just according to your mind, displeased because there was no other way to heaven besides that disagreeable one of gospel obedience, and your heart rising with peculiar aversion against the sentence of everlasting damnation? That you had been difinclined to God's providential disposals, had always wished to have the management of

yourfelf, being continually displeased with what was miniftered unto you; never rich enough nor great enough; things never to your mind; always diffatisfied, always complaining, always unthankful? Have you found, I fay, that you have been thus perverfely minded, quite another thing in heart and life from what a believer is, and every reasonable creature of God should be? Do you find that you have never owned God's dominion, nor subjected your conduct to his authority, nor paid any reverence to his tremendous threatenings, or gracious promifes, nor given yourfelf up to the guidance of his providence, but have been in the temper of your heart, and behaved in the actions of your life, as if you had been your own master, and there had been no God to rule over you; as if you had been fent into the world to do as you lift, and there was never any account to be taken; as if the world was made for you, and not you and it for God? I fay, have you led an ungodly, idle, wicked, unhumbled, felfish life? If this be your case, it is plain you cannot say, I believe in God the Father Almighty; for you do not at all believe in him as Lord over you. No, you are a rebel, and so you have always been; and let me tell you, fo God regards you. That indeed may feem a light matter now, but when the Almighty shall set the terrors of his indignation and vengeance in array against you, it will then not be fo indifferent a thing as you at prefent make it. Why, my friends, what in the name of God do you mean to do? You will not furely stand out in defiance! If so, you will infallibly fall into the hands of the living God; and that is a terrible thing. You cannot, can you, fight against him that made the worlds, and will burn them up with the breath of his mouth. You are not, you know you are not stronger than he. What then will the end of this be? Who do you really think will prevail? What, you, against God?-See if you can stand forth now, make the few following trials. Stop the course of yonder sun. Stop the advance of age. Say, I will never grow old. Keep fickness at a distance. Drive all disappointment before you. Arrest the hand of death, and with an authority that he dares not resist, tell him, Thou shalt not kill me. Come, do only this. Alas, are you not able? How then can you fight against God! O what, what will the end be! As your friend I heartily advise you, as your minister, as though God did befeech you by me, I humbly

plead with, intreat, and pray you to be reconciled to God. What a shame is it, when God condescends, that you shall stand out, refuse his offered mercy, refuse his service, and rush upon your own ruin; will you then continue obstinate? I trust you will not. Hear what mercy fays, that mercy which waits to be gracious to you, As I live, I have no pleasure in the death of a finner; why will ve die? Hear how injured Majesty affectingly complains, The ox knoweth his owner, but my people will not not consider. Hear what conscience remonstrates, Wilt thou thus requite the Lord? Hear how Jesus invites, Come to me and be faved, come and I will give thee a crown of life. Hear the voice of departed faints, O follow me; and the voice of departed finners, O come not into this place of torments. Hear the cry, the united cry of God, Christ, angels, ministers, time, death, judgment, eternity, heaven, hell-Return, return, and fave thy foul.

I can fay no more. The Lord give you his grace, without which all these cries and calls will be inessectual! The Lord give you his grace, and make you his happy everlasting fer-

vants. Amen, Amen.

Now unto the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wife God, be honour and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

## SERMON XI.

### Acts xvi. 30. 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

WE are now to conclude the first Article of the Creed, and to speak of the last words of it, Maker of heaven and earth.

The Person to whom creation is here ascribed is the Father. In divers places of scripture this work is attributed to the Son, as also to the Holy Ghost. Concerning which it should be obferved, that though the action of each person in the Trinity be that of the whole Godhead, inasmuch as the Three Persons do not subsist separately, but unitedly in the same substance, vet each person has an office towards us which is peculiar to himself, the actions of which cannot in the same sense be ascribed to the other. In all actions towards us, the order of the Trinity is, that the Father is the mover, and the Son executes from him by the Spirit, and nevertheless we are taught to fay, that certain actions are more proper to one of these divine Persons than to the others, in which view we ascribe the work of creation to the Father, the work of redemption to the Son, and the work of fanctification to the Spirit; notwithflanding that all these three works are originally in the Father, and that there is a concurrence and co-operation of all the persons in all of them.

To create, is to make what was not before. Before the creation there was nothing but God, who was pleased, by an astonishing exertion of his will and power, to produce all things into being, in all that beautiful order and excellent per-

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fection wherein they fublist. He created the heaven and the earth, and all things that are in both of them. 'For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible; whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were crea-

ted by him and for him.'

But simply to own that God is the maker of heaven and earth, is not to enter into the design of this point, considered as a matter of Christian faith. We must consider what is the end of God's making the heaven and the earth; for whatever that be, correspondent thereunto is the intention and disposition of the person here professing his faith. Now we are expressly told, that God did not create the world in vain, but that he made all things for himself, for his glory, that we hould show forth his praise; because not only of him and to him, but also and especially for him are all things. And if this was the design of the creation, then the faith of our professor, suitable hereunto, is an acknowledgement of God's right and property in all things for his glory, accompanied with a difpofition to use all things accordingly For the word is not this, I believe that God is the maker of heaven and earth; but I believe in God confidered in the character of the great Creator of all things,' which implies, that I am returned from my alienation and independency to my proper place of a creature, and am willing to behave toward God in a creaturely manner, glorifying him as the work of his own hands ought What was the temper of Adam's heart while in innocence towards his Creator, and what use was he disposed to make of himfelf, and every thing about him? Just that is the language of the believer's heart in regard to his Creator, and what he wishes to be and do when he fays, I believe in God, the maker of heaven and earth. The true belief of God as maker of all things restores the order of creation, brings into execution God's original defign, ranges every thing in its proper place, exalts the Creator, and reduces the creature to his due state of dependency. Wherefore to believe in the Maker of heaven and earth implies.

First, A disposition with reverence, humility, and adoration to ascribe unto God the glory of his works. The song of the elders is, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure

they

they are and were created. Like unto which is the fong of David, The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work. And elsewhere, When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? Believers have their senses exercised to discern the power, wisdom, and goodness of God in his works, with admiration and self-abasement. But unto the unbeliever, neither do the heavens declare the glory of God's perfections, nor do they know what it is, in the contemplation of God's wondrous works, to cry out with shame and altonishment, Lord, what is man? Either, not considering God in his works, or if they do, priding themselves in their curious discoveries, instead of humbling themselves in the sight of what God hath wrought, and giving glory to his Name.

Secondly, To believe in God the maker of heaven and earth, implies, a disposition to use all the creatures about us in a manner consistent with God's design in making them, bestowing them upon us, and restoring us to a right in them. I say, restoring us to a right in them; for the original right in the creatures was forseited in Adam, and no man can make other than an usurped use of them, unless he be in Jesus Christ, and under him restored to the authorised use of them. And whoever is so restored to a right in the creatures, is sensible that therein he enjoys an undeserved favour, which therefore he is disposed to use to the glory of God with thankfulness, reverence and modesty. Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thankfulness; for

Where you see the disposition of heart wherewith believers are to use all the creatures of God, to wit, believingly, as warranted to use them by the word of God; reverently, as looking up to God the giver, for a blessing; and thankfully, as being God's unmerited gift. And thus our believer professes himself desirous to use every creature, whether meat or drink or raiment, or whatever blessing or comfort of life; and in fact he does thus use them all in general with godly sear and humble thankfulness, notwithstanding he has reason to complain of his coming short in the measure of watchfulness and praise wherewith he endeavours to glorify God in the use of his

Thirdly, To believe in God the maker of heaven and earth, No. 2.

implies a disposition to regard and use ourselves both in soul and body as God's creatures, to his glory. Thy hands have made me and fashioned me; give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments. Which is as much as to fay, 'I am thy property, for I owe my whole being to thee; and therefore I befeech thee to instruct me how I shall use my whole self in such manner as shall answer thy design in making me. Cause me 6 to glorify thee with every faculty of my foul, which is thine in all the powers thereof. Let me know thee and thy will, and contemplate thy glories in the one and the other, in the ' use I make of my understanding; let my memory be the treafure-house of thy works and ways, thy judgements, and mercies, thy promifes, directions and threatnings; let my s will be the counterpart of thine, pliable and submissive to thy mind, choosing and refusing as thou wouldst have me; let my affections all center in thee, being withdrawn from the creature, and fet thyfelf up in my heart, as the fole object of my defire, my hope, my delight, my joy. Cause me also to · use every member of my body according to thy mind, and in that very way which will best promote thy glory. I have too long yielded my members instruments of unrighteousness unto fin, give me grace to yield them henceforward instruments of rightecousness unto the God that made and fashioned them; that e neither my hand act wickedness, nor my tongue speak perversely, nor my feet carry me to sin, nor mine eye look after iniquity, but every member in its proper use and employment may be devoted unto thee. Give me understanding, that · I may learn thy commandments.

Fourthly, To believe in God the maker of heaven and earth, is, in correspondence with his design of glorifying himself in his creatures, to use in a humble dependence all the powers of my soul and body, together with all my advantages and abilities, to his glory, in that station and calling which he has assigned me. The glory of God in the creation is manifest in a happy subserviency of his creatures in their several places.—The inanimate world sets us a pattern, the sun knoweth his going down, the wind and storms perform their commissions.—The animal world join in the instructive lesson, they wait all upon God; the young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God; the sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.' And

shall man disturb the harmony of God's works? shall he forget his station, and refuse to serve his Creator in his generation? Shall the moral world only be in disorder? shall men and devils pervert the order of God, and cause consusion in his work? Shall they affect independency, and act as if God had not made them? Not so our believer. He desires to perform the part allotted him in the world. He desires to live the creature, and to be faithful in the station assigned him in the great universe; if he be a child, to be dutiful; if a parent or master, to be faithful in his house; if a minister, to dispense the word of life with all readiness of mind; if a man of business, to be diligent, honest, and chearful in his employment. In short, whatever his place be, therein so demean himself, as that God may be gloristed in the world which he has made for himself.

That all these things are really contained in a true belief in God as maker of heaven and earth, may appear from an attention to their case who have not the disposition described.—

For,

First, Can they be faid to have any belief in God, as the Creator of themselves and all things, who have no eye to see God in his wonderful works, furrounding them as they are on every fide, have not the least regard to him, though they be the work of his hand, and to all intents and purpofes live in the world as if there were no God? I have not the least doubt there are some who hear me, that do not so much as once apply their minds to think of God for a whole day together, and for many days together, I had almost said for weeks together, for months, in short, at all. This is rash and uncharitable, you fay; for how can I possibly know this? What, can I tell you what is in people's heart? Not exactly what is there; but their conduct tells me what is not there. Would they own the truth, they would confess they have no real, deliberate thought or regard of God. How can it be, when they live as they do? following the world, and following their pleafures, their minds, thoughts, and hearts always taken up with some perverse thing? And can these believe in the God that made them? Though they pretend to fay they do, when they repeat the Creed, shall we, can we believe them, when they live daily as if they were their own makers and masters, as if God had no right over them, nor property in them?-But

But there are others who are not so gross, men of speculation, who can read you fine lectures upon the power and wisdom of God in the works of creation in heaven and earth, and yet these are as far at least from the humble dependent spirit of creatures as the other. Human learning will furnish a man with many pretty and entertaining speculations; but it is grace only that teaches the heart to know its place in creation, to return to the dependent character, and with true felf-abasement as creatures and finners, to own God the maker of heaven and earth. Philosophical inquiries are widely different from spiritual and practical knowledge; and they who have amused themselves the most in nice researches into the works of nature, and made very just observations from thence upon the perfections of God, shall find at last, if they have gone no farther, and have not learnt to be humbled before the great God their maker, that they have known nothing as they ought to know, and that the injured Maker of the world will not be fatisfied with fubtle speculations, instead of the return of an apostate spirit, upon the offer of pardon in Jesus Christ, and by the grace ministered in him, unto the temper and conduct of creatures dependent upon him and bowing before him.

Secondly, Does that person believe in God as the maker of heaven and earth, who abuses God's creatures to his dishonour? You cannot but be fensible, that to believe in God as Creator, is to pay some regard to him in that character, falling in with his defign in making all things. But where is this regard, if we oppose the end of creation in the use of God's creatures? Was it God's design in making food for our fublistence, that we should take occasion to indulge our palates, make a god of our bellies; or, as is fometimes done, eat almost to suffocation? Was drink provided for us to be used as it too commonly is? Had God any design thereby to draw us together, that we might run into excess; to pass the glass from one to another till sober reason should leave us, to make us merry, as it is called, that is, unguarded and disso-. lute, and fit for any work the devil may have for us to do?-What think you was God's purpose in giving us raiment? Think a little, I pray you, what it could possibly be. You that are fo fond of outward adorning, of plaiting the hair, (take notice, it is the word of scripture) of wearing of gold, and of putting on of apparel, ask your own consciences whether

ther God made these things for the use you make of them, which is, whether you will believe it or no, to pride yourselves upon your sinery, to set yourselves out as so many shews, to be gazed upon and admired, and to make the world think your persons of more than ordinary consideration? But there is no end of particulars. O when shall we learn to use the world as not abusing it! In the mean time, till we do, let us consess, that we do not believe in God as maker of heaven and earth.

Thirdly, Can that person own God as his Creator, who abuses his soul in the love of sin, and his body in the practice of it? To fay God made me, foul and body, and yet in foul and body to behave as if there was no relation between God and me, is in effect to strike myself out of God's creation.-To fay I believe God gave me my foul to glorify him, and yet to have neither knowledge, nor thought, nor love, nor defire of him in my heart, but the whole bent of my foul to be after worldly things, just as if God had not made me, and it was not my concern to glorify him with my spirit: at the same time, to employ every member of my body in fuch base services as are directly subversive of God's purpose in giving it to me; what are these but flat contradictions? And yet how much is this the practice of many who call God their maker! Sirs, do you all verily judge that God gave you your foul and body for his use and glory? And do you all use them both with this defign? What, is it the main care of all of you to give up your fouls to God, to his glory, and your bodies also to him, to his glory? Why, when I befeech you, did many of you think of fuch a thing? When enquire how you might do it? When use any kind of endeavours towards it? When, I fay, did you diligently inquire how God might be glorified in your spirit and body, which are his; when set yourself to the performance of it; when cast out of your heart such sludies and pursuits as, instead of honouring, are difgraceful to God, praying and labouring that your foul might be furnished with those graces and dispositions which are his due and your duty; or when forego fuch and fuch a practice, because you found it contrary to God's glory, or fet yourfelf to this and that duty, because you found God would be glorified by it? Sirs, own the truth, when did you ever think or act upon this plan, so evidently suited to, so essential to the just character of the creature? What, never? What, not for one week,

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one day, in your whole lives? If this has been your case, have you not been a blank in God's creation? A blank, yea, rather a blot. A foul blot in God's works, bearing upon your soul and body, in the face of the whole world, nay, in the presence of rejoicing devils, the reproach of God your maker. Alas, my friends, how unlike Christ, the fairest among ten thousand! How was his soul moulded into this one heavenly impression stamped upon the whole of it, glory to God! And his life, how it followed in acts of universal, ceaseless sulmission to the divine will! Father, he said, in the conclusion of the whole, I have glorified thee upon earth. Ah, my dear brethren, look upon this Jesus, and be consounded. What, cannot you take up the word of Christ? No; not in the least desire, attempt, endeavour? Must you altogether say, God, I have dishonoured thee on earth? Then say not, I believe in

God the maker of heaven and earth.' Yet.

Fourthly, Can they acknowledge God to be their maker, who dishonour him in their special calling? All stations are God's appointment, and in that we are severally placed in, it is every man's duty to glorify God, and to maintain the honour of God the Creator. To act our part therein perversely or negligently, is to damage the beauty of God's work, to disturb the order of God's arrangement, and signally to disgrace him that made us. Can I own God fo eminently to be the maker of all things for his glory, as by my zeal, diligence, and fidelity in my proper station? Therefore can I otherwise fo capitally dishonour him, as by a contrary conduct? What then can we conceive of fuch as feem to have come to a conclusion, that they have nothing to do; that because they need not work for a support, therefore they may with all reason be idle, live upon the labours of others, lie a burden upon the public, and no living man be the better for them, any farther than they cannot help their being fo by unavoidable expences? Can we think God made any man thus for nought; or that to be a gentleman is not as much a calling as to be a labourer; or that there are not duties as proper to the one of them as the other? Great ones, it feems, if their conduct be a fafe rule to judge by, have the privilege of doing nothing, and are exempted from the curse laid by God on all the children of Adam, 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, still thou return unto the ground.' But is this privilege any where in scripture really granted them? What shall we think

of parents, and masters of families, who know no other use of their authority than to gratify their own will, are incomparably more careful to maintain the fear of themselves than the fear of God in their houses, and regard not what example they fet to those who are under them? What shall we think of indolent ministers, who care not how the flock be fcattered, so themselves be fed? What shall we think of supine Magistrates, who are proud of the honour of their office, but take no care to discharge the duties of it? suffering the fword of justice to sleep in its sheath, and not drawing it out to cut off iniquity, and to maintain true religion and virtue? What shall we think of men of business, who leave their shops to take their pleafure, abuse their time and substance in riotous living; and while they are faid to be of this and that profession, are known to have no other than that of idleness and extravagance? In short, if God made all things for his glory, and that glory can only be maintained by our subjection to his will and orders in our feveral allotments, how can God be glorified by those who are so far from seeking to honour God in their places, that they neglect the duties of them? or how can fuch believe in God as their maker?

On the whole then, we conclude, that the true, plain, and practical fense and meaning of these words is this. 'I believe God the Father, the Governor of the world, to be the maker of it, for his own glory. It is my defire that he may be glorified by all the works of his hands. For my own part, fince by the power and grace of Jesus Christ I am brought out of that horrible state of darkness, alienation, and sin, wherein, with the whole fallen race of Adam, I lay by nature, I am ready, and do purpose to behave towards. God as his creature and subject in every respect, chearfully returning to my place under him in his great creation, and determining to bring all the glory to him that is in my power. With shame, abasement, and reverence, I own his wisdom, 'power, and goodness, in making me and all things out of onothing, and I defire to think and act, as one who derives e all I am and have from him, using all the various bleffings he has provided for me with thankfulnefs, acknowledgment, calling upon his name, and due fear of dishonouring my Maker, by using them amis. I regard myself as his workman-6 ship, formed to set forth his praise; and I yield up my every power of foul and body to be employed unto his glory,

according to his will; fully refolved never again to give up my foul to those thoughts and studies which pride, interest, and indulgence fuggest, nor my body to serve the base puro poses which these lusts have too much directed me to pur-· fue: but univerfally in both to remember and ferve my Creator. And inafmuch as God hath honoured me with a fpecial place and station under him in his creation, to that I am determined to have a special regard, and to carry myself in it in fuch a manner, that his honour may fuffer no more damage through my negligence and fault; but laying afide the confideration of my own praise, or interest, or convenience, and every other worldly respect, I do profess and declare that to promote his glory therein both is, and by his grace shall be, my great endeavour and aim. In one word; I judge it my bounden duty, and it is my real choice, in every thing to think and act as the creature of God, dependent upon him and fubservient to him. And this is what I avow myfelf determined to do, when I fay, 'I believe in God the " maker of heaven and earth."

Take one word at parting. What a confusion has sin brought into God's creation! Angels began the apostasy, man has followed them. Who would think that God has made us, to fee what we do? Sin has subverted all. Sin has put creation into disorder. What is become of the glory of God in his works? But I see the Restorer of the breach. Immanuel is come to restore all things, to exalt the Creator, by bringing in to their allegiance some of the proud apostates, and to make the others know with the finners of hell that God shall be glorified. What an undertaking! Look at your hearts, my friends, and fee what an undertaking! Who is fufficient for it? Why, Jesus is. He that brought beauty, harmony, and order out of the first chaos, is able to do it. He can, he will, he has already in part. Look again to your hearts, believers, and see if he has not; for your Creator again reigns there.-In part, you fay, but it shall be wholly. Witness the firstborn which are written in heaven, the spirits of just men made perfect. Yes, the day is coming, when ye shall fay, What hath the hand of the Lord wrought! To him that is able to fubdue all things to himfelf, to him that loved us, and washed us from our fins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for eyer and eyer. Amen.

## SERMON XII.

#### Acts xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

WE have gone through the several points contained under the first Article of the Creed, and which are relative to God the Father. The second branch has regard to God the

Son, and his office as Redeemer.

Now the subject matter contained herein is this. You profess your belief in Jesus as your all-sufficient Saviour. And then, Secondly, You declare the grounds upon which fuch your belief in him as your Saviour doth stand, to wit, 1. As having been duly anointed to this office, implied in the name Christ; 2. As being the only Son of the Father; 3. As being our Lord; 4. As having been conceived of the Holy Ghoft; and born of the Virgin Mary; having suffered under Pontius Pilate; been crucified, dead, and buried; and having descended into hell. 5. As having rifen the third day from the dead, and ajcended into beaven; as fitting on the right hand of God Almighty; and as coming from thence to judge the quick and the dead. The word Jefus, you see, must be carried forward to all the points that follow; and the service is, I believe in Jesus, as being the Anointed, as being the only Son, as being our Lord, as conceived, born, crucified, and dead; as rifen, ascended, exalted, and coming to judgment. His mediatorial sufficiency depends on all this together, and therefore there is not so much as one point to be omitted, consistently with a real belief in Jefus as a complete Saviour.

The first and great point, which is the result of all the rest,

is, I believe in Jesus.

The word Jesus, every one knows, fignifies Saviour .-And therefore when I fay, I believe in Jesus, I declare. that I believe in him as my Saviour; which, nevertheless is impossible, any farther than I am both sensible of my want of falvation, in regard of those things wherein he is a Saviour, and also that in all those respects he is sufficient and fuited to my purpose. To talk of believing in a Saviour. when I really find not a want of a Saviour, is to talk nonfense; and to declare, that I believe in Jesus as sufficient every way to fave me, when, being unacquainted with those fure grounds upon which his faving power stands, I am not really satisfied that he is able to fave me, is to affert a direct palpable fallehood. Confequently, whoever fays truly, I believe in Jesus, is as well acquainted with his being in a miserable, helpless and undone estate in himself, as that there is a fulness and sufficiency in Jesus to help him completely out of it. Without the former, namely, an acquaintance with our mifery and helpleffness, there is an absolute impossibility of believing in Tefus; and it is only in proportion to our acquaintance with the latter, namely, his fufficiency, that we can exalt him in our hearts, as the Saviour we profess him to be unto us. As to the grounds upon which the person here speaking is confirmed in the fufficiency of Jesus to save him, they will be confidered afterwards; here they are supposed to be known and believed: and not less the professor's sense of his misery and helplessines in himself. So that the words are the declaration of one, who having found mifery in himself, and help in one that is mighty to fave, openly avows, that Jefus is all his falvation. Now in this plain, reasonable, and, I conceive, incontestable state of the matter, it appears, that in the words before us are implied, an acknowledgement of all that mifery from which Jesus is said in the scripture to be come to save us; and also that the whole hope and confidence of the foul are lying on him. And so of course to say, I believe in Jesus, is as much as to declare,

First, I believe in him as my deliverer from the power of

darkness and ignorance.

Secondly, I believe in him as my deliverer from the curse of the law, due unto me, and threatned against me for my sins. Thirdly, I believe in him as my deliverer from all my spiritual enemies.

Fourthly, I believe in him as my great, final, and full de-

liverer at his judgement-day.—In all which points it will be necessary to observe, as we go along, both that there is a renunciation of ourselves, and also an acceptation of Jesus; and at the same time to inquire how it stands with ourselves con-

cerning it.

First. I believe in him as my deliverer from the power of darkness and ignorance. Man by nature is in a state of blindness and ignorance. All that he can see of spiritual things, without the light of the word and spirit, is but that confused, traditionary knowledge that has been handed down from generation to generation, the effect of which is little other than felf-condemnation; and even that knowledge I fay traditionary, not acquired by the exercise of man's reason, but received by information from others, though indeed capable of being reafoned upon afterwards, and so of considerable improvement. Man, fince the fall, is (without the help of foreign light) in a state of utter spiritual darkness; a reasonable creature, but incapable of differning spiritual things by any exercise of his unaffifted reason; nay, and when that foreign light is afforded him, he cannot be benefited, or understand the things that are declared by it, unless by a supernatural influence both his will be stirred up to seek into it, and his mind enlightned to receive it. This is the scripture account of the matter; where we are faid to be darkness, to be without God in the world, to be without hope, and the wifest of us, by all our wisdom, not to know God. Of this his natural estate of blindness and ignorance our professor is made duly sensible; as he is also, that Tefus, by the light of the word and spirit, is the only one who can direct his steps. He ascribes it to Jesus, that he was at first enlightned whilst he lay in his dark state of sin and ignorance, and was made to difcern and fee the finfulness and mifery of that condition, and the way out of it prepared by the mercy of God, and executed by the only-begotten made flesh. And he is equally well advised by felf-experience, that if left to himfelf, he should instantly lose fight of all the glorious things belonging to his peace, which are now so evidently and delightfully before his eyes; and that it is the Lord therefore who hath made, and still makes his darkness to be light.

Now here you fee is a manifest renunciation of the sufficiency of human reason, both to discover to us any of the

things of God, and more especially the way of peace in the most needed Redeemer. The true believer in Jesus has no high conceit of his own powers, as they now are in his fallen state. He cannot cry up human reason to make revelation needless; no, nor to sit as judge upon the declarations of infinite wissom, measuring them by the pretended rule of what is called Natural Religion, and rejecting what does not come within the reach of man's understanding. He gladly accepts the offered light; is well content to take any thing upon God's authority; waits continually to be taught the will of God and the way of salvation; and will trust neither to himself nor others for the truth of divine things, but only to Jesus, that great Prophet that should come into the world.—But this I fear is not the com-

mon way.

Those were they, a long while ago, who disclaimed all teaching of the Spirit as mere pretence, or as they were pleafed to call it, cant and enthusiasm. Indeed pretensions thereto, without the word, are no better than enthusiasm. But if the Spirit, without the word, be delusion, the word, without the Spirit, to the unaffisted mind in its natural and corrupted state, is dark, unprofitable and unfanclified. Nevertheless reason has been thought sufficient of itself to fathom and unfold the deep things of God. And fee what the rejection of the Spirit has come to; depraved reason, because not able to comprehend, has mangled and tortured the great doctrines of the gofpel; taken away the whole power of the word, and left it an unanimated and unanimating lump, a little better, and that is all, than the dry philosophy of the Heathen. The wife and the prudent, they that would be fo without God's making, have very reasonably and justly had the distinguishing and quickening truths of the gospel hid from them, while those very doctrines have, in the plainest manner, been revealed unto babes by the Spirit, opening their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures. But while man's wisdom, by disclaiming the illumination of the Spirit, at least in practice if not in express terms, has put down God's word, I mean as to the distinguishing and vital doctrine of it; the people have fuffered irreparable damage; the power of godliness has died away, and even moral honesty and decency, being stript of their main supports, have been forced to give ground to a general libertinism and licentiousness. I will not

conceal the truth; the present dissoluteness of manners among us began in the exploding the operations of the Spirit; fo the scriptures being a sealed book, because the key to them was thrown away, every man fet his blind reason to interpret them; mysteries were set apart or lowered to nothing; and the gospel came forth not unlike a painted fun on a canvass, bearing some poor refemblance of the original, but absolutely without light or heat. But this is not all; our forefathers, in the pride of their reason, having refused the aid of the Spirit, and thereby miffed of the whole spirituality of God's word, we of this age, their still wifer children, have too many of us proceeded farther, and to the refusal of the Spirit boldly added a renunciation of the word also. Reason it seems cannot digest many things that are there; some things in it are not to be comprehended, and how can we believe what we cannot comprehend? Others are objectionable; we do not fee the reasonableness and consistence of them; others are contrary to our notions of things, neither can we reconcile it, how God should determine and direct as he is sometimes there said to do. Every little pretender to knowledge and debate will have his fling at the Bible; reason is set up in its place. Reason. that noble faculty, which, it feems, is capable of reaching through the universe; of founding the very depths of God's government; can, as if brought up with him, nicely adjust the measure of all his counsels, determine the reason of all his doings, and exactly point out what is fit for him to expect from his creatures, in short, do every thing, except it be the one needful thing, find out a way how the poor guilty finner shall be faved.

The contest you see is between reason and Jesus; whether the fall has left our understandings darkened and insufficient to any spiritual discernment, and we need to be taught of Jesus, who is come, by his word and Spirit, to teach us all things which pertain unto life and godliness; or whether we stand not in any need of this his teaching, having power sufficient in our unaffisted reason to discern the way of life in the Scriptures without the Spirit, or to discover a scheme of religion for ourselves, without the help of the one or the other.—It is evident, that they, who set up reason against the Spirit or the word, cannot take Christ for their teacher, neither can they say with an honest conscience, I believe in Jesus, since one

grand point of the falvation which he claims as his property to give us, and which we, when we fay, we believe in him, declare that we hold from him, is deliverance from darkness and ignorance concerning all the things of God. The point is of the very first importance. In fact, nothing can be right if we fail here. Reason must first vield, otherwise we dispute every step of gospel-falvation; we quarrel at the justice of God's fentence against us as sinners; cannot be brought to think we are fuch helpless creatures as God tells us we are; and at no rate can digeft, either his method of justifying us by the rightcousness of another, or those other self-denying duties which the gospel injoins us. The pride of reason must bow, else the falvation of the gospel will never take place. We must become fools, if we will be wife; and in order that we may submit ourselves to Christ's teaching, we must put on the temper of little children, who, because they know nothing, are pliable to receive every thing from their parents and teachers. And till we do this, or any farther than we do it, coming wholly for instruction to Christ's word, and praying for his Spirit, let us not presume to say what contradicts our practice, I believe in Fefus. But,

Secondly, I believe in Jesus implies this also, 'I believe in' him as my Deliverer from the curfe of the law due to me, and threatned against me for my fins. I acknowledge myself a finner, conceived in fin, the deadly body of which remains within me; I cannot do any thing as I ought; as formerly, fo now I am daily finning in thought, word, and deed, infomuch that at no time, nor in any one instance, have I been able, or am I now able to answer the high, but most holy and defirable demands of the law. I cannot make any claim to life by my own doings; for I do not what the law requires of me. On that footing there is nothing before me but death, which God, I am fatisfied, has in perfect righteousness and iustice appointed to be the wages of fin; neither have I the · least remedy, help or hope in myself. I cannot make the in-• jured God satisfaction; in no way can I do this. Not by · better obedience, certainly all thought of that is vain; it would not cancel past offences, and the wages of every fin of my life is death; death, which may not be remitted, which. must be endured; while also every day and hour I am sinning afresh and adding to the number of my provocations, and

the load of my guilt. I cannot therefore make God fatisfaction by better obedience. No, nor would my endurance of ten millions of years imprisonment in hell retrieve the disgrace my fins have brought upon him. The wrath to come is eternal, because injured Majesty can never be satisfied by any measure of punishment laid upon sinners. There is then utterly no hope in myself; but I have heard of Jesus; I know him to be the Son of God; I am fatisfied his bufiness in the world was to fave finners; I am affured that infinite God as he is, he took up our nature; in that nature he put all possible, and more than conceivable honour upon the law by his obedience unto it; and by his death made fuch a fatisfaction to God's justice, las ten thousand times ten thoufand hells could not equal. Him God has accepted in his atonement for finners: for I fee him for his obedience unto death exalted to glory and immortality, as the representative of believing finners. I hear, in confideration of that death, the most bleffed promises issued out from the court of heaven, and recorded in that book which shall outlive the world. God himself has told me, that all that believe in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Yea, he has commanded me. upon the peril of my foul, to believe on the name of his only-be-' yotten Son. Since then God will have it fo, and will get himfelf glory by freely justifying the ungodly, I have humbly taken him at his word, and do put in my claim to his pardon and acceptance, in confideration of the obedience and death of Jesus. Hither am I come for refuge, and here do I rest my foul upon the Redeemer's righteouspess. Confessing my fins, I lay my hand upon his head, and ask the offered mercy, and proclaim this to be all my falvation; while in the fight of all my guilt, in the prospect of death, and judgment, and hell, I joyfully take up my word, and fay, I bebieve in Jesus. Let others seek salvation, and rest their hope where they will, I believe in Jesus.'

Here you find is a plain renunciation of all felf-righteoufness, and as plain and full acceptance of the righteoufness of Jesus. And, in truth, what an absurdity is it, to declare a belief in Jesus for pardon and acceptance with God, when we are cleaving, either in whole or in part, unto a pretended righteousness of our own? You cannot but observe, that to accept Christ's righteousness is to disclaim our own, as utterly

infufficient; and when we fay, I believe in Jesus, what do we other than publish our relinquishing all hope from the one, and our placing all hope in the other, since it is so evident that the point before us is a matter of christian faith, and that as persons saved by grace, we do hereby acknowledge our consent to such salvation? Yet after all, this is sooner said than done. There are many things standing in the way of our saying in sincerity of heart, I believe in Jesus as my deliverer from the curse of the law, due to me and threatened against me for my sins. Wherefore we shall do well seriously to inquire into this business. I would ask therefore two very plain

questions.

1. Are we all truly made fensible that we have no righteoulnels of our own? By righteoulnels is meant a conformity with the law of God in heart and life. Whoever can produce this conformity with the law of God, is certainly righteous; has a righteousness of his own upon which he may safely stand, and has no manner of need of the righteousness of Jesus the Saviour. But then you must take notice, this must be a perfeet conformity of heart and life, and that at all times, for the law speaks but one language, and admits of no abatement. Should there be outward perfect conformity, yet if the inward be wanting, that could not avail; yea, and though thereshould be outward and inward both, yet if it were not always fo, we could not pretend any right, as finless. Upon this ftate of the case, every man without exception, is ready to own, 'I am not come up to this, we are all finners.' Even they who do not fee their hearts, and the ocean of iniquity that is there, cannot help owning, that in word and deed they have many times finned; and they who do know their hearts will be as ready to own, that matters have been a great deal worse with them. Now you would be apt to think, when people talk at this rate, they do very readily disclaim all selfrighteousness, and lean on nothing within themselves. But in truth it is no fuch matter, we have many a shift under all this acknowledgment of guilt to make ourfelves eafy. We have the art of making small account of fins, and great account of duties; putting out the eye of conviction by the many good things we feemingly do, and teaching our consciences to fay, they are not fuch mighty matters in which we are to blame.-We have a strange dexterity in finding out excuses, and so letting

letting the thing pass as if it were nothing; 'It is true I was very angry, but they provoked me, and the like.' We have a trick of forgetfulness; commit sin, and in a day or two, all is as if we had never done amiss. We are very ready at comparisons; 'O I would not do as such a one does for the world! What will the world come to? what, have people · lost all shame?" We are ready to put one thing against another, as the faving is, 'True, I have done fo and fo, but then in other things, no one can fay any harm of me; for I am fure no man can fay I am whore, thief, or drunkard.'-There is no end of those inventions, which pride will be fuggesting to patch up a fort of righteousness, upon which people will sleep as quietly as if the law had laid no charge against them, or as if they were secured under the righteousness of Christ. Now, brethren, are none of you upon this footing? Are none of you thinking pretty well of yourselves upon the whole, and for one thing and another hoping that you are in a tolerable case, although you have not seriously seen your lost condition as finners, nor come to Jesus to save you from the wrath that is to come? This is no uncommon case, it is most certain; and if it were the case of none of us, we should not lead the cold, felfish, lukewarm, indifferent lives that too many of us do.

2. But if we are really sensible that we have no righteousness of our own, are we not going about to seek one as well as we can? It is a common language, I know, upon sick beds, O, if I recover, I will never do as I have done.' And without question what some do in sickness, others practise in health,

to wit, stifle convictions by resolutions.

Then again, you may be apt to think in yourself, 'Well, for my part, I have done with pleasures and company keeping; it is not with me now as it was formerly; I have done with the world; I read my Bible, and keep my church, and fay my prayers. Surely things are altered with me much for the better.'

Or you may go about to fet up your own righteousness this way, 'Come, I will be charitable, I will give to the poor,' thinking to make amends for your fins by your liberality. Or this way again, 'O, if I could but for sake and get the better of such a thing, if it were not for such a particular sin that I fo often fall into! That must be for saken, and then all will No. 2.

be right.' Devices of this kind are very natural to the pride of man, and which, I doubt not, every person here present has found his heart bufily employed in, at one time or other. But, in the mean time, they are but fo many tricks to heal up the wounds of a gnawing conscience, to stop true conviction of fin, and to keep us from Christ, without whom we perish. Can any purpose, or even practice of reformation, with never fo many good things performed by us, make up for old fins, that is (for nothing less will do) make them in truth to be none? If not, if they are still our fins, are not we still chargeable with them? Who should, but ourselves? And has not God faid, The wages of sin is death? How then shall that sentence be annulled? There are two capital objections to this scheme which we are considering. The one is, that a perfect conformity to God's law now, could I attain it, would make no fatisfaction for past iniquities; for in that case, I should only do my present duty, and consequently leave the debt of old fins just where it was, absolutely undischarged. The other, that I do not in fact now conform to God's law, no nor ever shall, according to the strict spirituality of it; so that, in reality, the longer I live, the more I enlarge my debt and the obligation to punishment. But notwithstanding this, many still who have not a righteousness of their own, will be for getting one as well as they can, vainly hoping to stand in it before God.

Now in either of these cases, you must needs see, there can be no real belief in Jesus Christ for pardon and acceptance with God. If either we conceit we have a righteousness of our own, or are feeking to get one, we are quite out of God's way, of justifying the ungodly by the righteourness of Jesus -And I befeech you let us consider; we say we believe in Jesus: but do we so, when we trust in ourselves? Is it possible I should make both my own righteousness and that of Jesus my foundation at once? The truth is, we do not go closely to the bottom with ourselves to see the truth of our case; we have and can have no legal righteousness. That God knows, and therefore has provided one for us in Jesus. But if you doubt this, state the matter fairly before your own conscience.-Have you ever answered, or can you now answer the demands of the law? If you fay no; (and that you must fay, if you know but never fo little of God's law and of your ownh eart) then then it is plain to your confcience that you are destitute of the laws of righteousness, and are a sinner. And thereupon the question is, how will you get God's favour? What, by your own righteousness, when you say you have and can have none? or by the righteousness of Jesus, which God has provided for you? God's favour is what you want. But then, since you are a sinner, you have no right to it, and must be thankful to take it in God's own way; otherwise you will go without it, and your sins, guilt, and punishment, rest on your own head. It is the thought of that should alarm you. O think of it with all soberness. You have sinned, and death standeth at the door. How great a death! and how eternal! O think of your sins, and think of your sentence, and think how you can possibly escape, if you neglect so great salvation!

# SERMON XIII.

#### Acrs xvi. 30. 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

DO believe in Jesus implies this; I believe in him as my Deliverer from all my spiritual enemies. The great spiritual enemy, under which all the others fight, and by means of which they bring us into any danger, is original sin, varioufly called, the flesh, the law of sin, the body of this death and of fin, and many times sin simply, by way of eminence; that principle of fin in fallen man, which, on the one hand, is enmity against God, not enduring either his service or his prefence; and, on the other, is perpetually foliciting the foul to fenfual, earthly, and devilish things; by its perverse motions filling the imagination with finful and vain thoughts, and thereby blinding the understanding, that it should not discern fpiritual things, and biaffing the will, that it should not choose These effects, in the full power of them, does the principle of fin produce in the unregenerate; while they, who are indeed regenerate, experience the baleful influence of it still abiding in them, both in keeping them from that nearness and perfectness of heart with God which they earnestly long for, and ceaselesly exciting in them its motions of pride, worldliness, and carnality. It is by means of this principle, that the men, or things of the world, have influence and power to stop, and retard the believer in his progress to glory; or that the devil can gain any effectual opportunity to difmay, or feduce us. Finally, to be delivered from this body of fin is the believer's first desire; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likelikeness. But, in the mean time, he earnestly wishes as well to be kept from the power of it (so that he may be always enabled to oppose its suggestions whenever, upon occasion, from without, of the world, or the devil, they rise up in him, pleading for indulgence) as to find its influence abating and its strength

declining from day to day.

This shews you what the believer means by his spiritual enemies. And the ground of his believing in Jefus for dominion over them is twofold; partly, because he knows and finds that he cannot of himself either obtain or keep the mastery of them; and partly, because he knows the Saviour can.—He knows he cannot himself, from the very nature of the thing, because it is the property of this principle of fin to keep him from God, and to lead him quite the other way, in a course of indulgence, covetoufness, and pride of one fort or another; and this principle is in him, and actually constitutes his prefent nature, fo that it must of course, as every creature's nature does, reign over him, if left to himfelf, without either will or power in him to restrain it. Nor is this all the proof he has of his infufficiency hereunto. Experience has taught him, and does teach him the fame thing. The body of fin has had, and still has its weight. It always keeps him from living fo near to God as he would, and from being disposed towards him as he wishes and ought to be; while also he finds every day, that those finful motions which are proper to it are too many, and too bufy, that he should be able in any one instance to keep his conduct undefiled by them, or free, in many fad inftances, from fuch fuccess as abundantly shames and grieves him, in feeing thereby what he is. Scripture also adds its testimony unto his absolute inability to subdue his spiritual enemies, afferting in the plainest terms, that without Christ we can do nothing, affuring us, that in us, that is, in our flesh, dwelleth no good thing, and afcribing all the good that is wrought in any one of us unto God, who, it is faid, himfelf worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. -But what he knows himself unable to do for himself, he knows Jesus is able to do for him, who was raifed up, that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us, so that being delivered we might ferve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. In which regard Jesus is said to be made of God unto us sanctification. This is the character in which he is

represented by the prophet: He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of filver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and filver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be plea-fant unto the Lord. His fulfilment of which is attested by the evangelist, in the person of himself and of all believers, Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. As to this point therefore, he who professes belief in Jesus, doth thereby disclaim dependence on his own strength, (if the term be not improper, fince in spiritual things, and against his spiritual enemies, he has evidently none) and declare his trust is in the strength of Jesus. How this matter stands with us, in fact ought to be confidered. The point is, have we a real experience that there is a principle of fin in us, which must absolutely prevent us from every thing good, if we are left to ourselves,

neither enabled nor supported by the grace of Christ?

If we find fuch a principle of fin in us, the tendency of which is to keep us from God, and fix us upon the pursuits of this prefent world, then the case is clear, and we must seek help where we can obtain it. But can we feek that help, when either we deny there is any fuch principle in us, or though we own it in speculation, yet have not concern enough about our fouls to take any care it may not rule over us? There are they who deny it, though themselves are among the most pregnant proofs of it in the whole of their conduct, being evidently led along by the principles of pride, or covetousness, or sensual inclination; which it were hard to conceive how they could have contracted by the mere force of custom; and the uniformity of which in all the children of men, abundantly shews to be the effects of that same one principle of sin, which is in the nature of all alike, and makes our hearts as like one another as our faces. But though you own your fallen state doctrinally, what can it avail, while you have no concern to be converted unto God, and daily renewed in your mind by the power of the Holy Ghost? How, in that case, can you believe in Jesus? You may declare a renunciation of your own strength, and an acceptance of his; but if all be in your head, you are just where you were; and be affured once for all, Jesus is no Saviour of yours. Yet, my dear brethren, what proof can many of you give that it is at all otherwise with you? If you were really sensible that you wanted the grace of Christ to de-

liver you from the power and dominion of original fin, supported as it is upon its throne by the wiles of the devil, and the enjoyments of the world; and if at the same time you heartily defired to be fet free from that detestable service, would you not, knowing that Jesus alone was able to help you, make very frequent and importunate applications for his aid? But now, fay in conscience, when did you so?-When did you fall down before him and fincerely befeech him, that he would vouchfafe to deliver you from that body of fin you found in you? I do not ask, when you did something which you call faying your prayers, and doing your duty (that you may do a great deal of, after a certain manner, and be even nothing the better) but I ask, when you prayed for a new heart; to be fet at liberty from fin; to have that pride which is in you done away; your covetousness mortified; your love of pleafure, company, and indulgence crucified?-What, never? No, I am perfectly affured, never to any purpose; never heartily and honestly. You have not done it, and you do not do it; you know you do not, and I know, as well as you, that you do not. Nay, you are faying, Does the man pretend to know our hearts? can he know what passes in our chambers and closets? Yes, verily, thus far I certainly know, and so may any one else, that neither in your chamber, nor in the church, nor any where else, you really pray for a new heart, and deliverance from the dominion of your finful nature; for if you did, you would be most assuredly set free; fince God has promifed to give the Spirit to them that ask him; and yet you are not fet free, but are as much as ever the flave of your own lufts; as much as ever without God in the world; proud, wilful, impatient, earthly, covetous, idle, vain, intemperate, as much as ever. And yet you will be faying, I believe in Jesus. Surely you can have no thought of what you are doing when you say so, since it is so manifestly false, and the contrary is this moment so incontestibly evident to your own conscience. O Sirs, consider how that word, I believe in Jesus, which you have so often said in vain in the midst of God's people, and as if you had been one of their happy number, confider how that word must rife up in the judgment against you! how it must shame, confound, and condemn you, in the face of the dishonoured Jesus, sitting on the clouds of heaven with the affembled world before him, at-H 4 tended

tended by the whole host of ministering angels, and holding up the righteous balance to weigh your doings, in order to the allotment of your place of future eternal residence, whether it shall be heaven or hell.

Fourthly, To believe in Jefus implies this alfo; I believe in him as my full, final, and eternal deliverer: which is as much as to fay, I look for a perfection of holiness in my foul, a glorious refurrection of my body, and a life everlatting in him. Christ is not only of God made unto us wisdom and righteousness and fanctification, but also redemption; which, as it stands diftinguished from the other three, has reference to the final completion and finishing of his work of falvation, begun in the present exercise of his offices towards us, as our Prophet, Priest, and King, by whom we are now (as many as believe) taught, justified, and fanctified. Perfection of happiness is impossible without these two things, First, Perfect holiness in the foul. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord; absolute unholiness is a total disqualification for any such fight of God, as brings the least measure of happiness along with it: and therefore perfect holiness is absolutely necessary to perfect happiness in God. And this our professor waits for, in Jesus, and by the operation of his mighty grace. He cannot effect it of himself: as well might he have made himself out of nothing. It is a divine work, and is called creation in the fcriptures. In the old creation God finished the whole glorious work in fix days, but the perfecting this unto its whole beauty, glory, and order, is carried on progressively, beginning in regeneration, which is the first implanting in the foul of the fallen creature that principle of grace, which gaining strength by perpetual influences of the Spirit who first begat it, and by various discipline of every kind suited thereunto, grows up towards that perfect state to which it shall be advanced in the future world; when, besides other dispensations in this life, which have tended and been made effectual to the daily mortification of the body of fin, the whole of it shall have been utterly destroyed by death, and Jesus present the church unto himself, holy, without blemish, spot, wrinkle, or any such thing, in virtue of that most certain but inexpressible union fublishing between him and it.

Now, my friends, what can the polishing of philosophy do in so great a business? There has been much talk about go-

verning the passions, and restraining the appetites, and bringing up the mind to a manly steadiness, by the force of reason. This was well attempted indeed by those who had no greater light. But alas, how unfuccefsfully! The principle of fin, which is in all, only took another road; and by the excess of pride laid restraint on the rage of inclination. To be born again, to be perfected in holiness, is the work of God. vain may we think of attempting it by our own powers. As well might an angel effay burning up the universe, to make a new heaven and earth out of its ashes. But to know what the work is, confounds all human confidence, and every foul. fensible of its own insufficiency cries out, Create in me a clean heart O God, and renew a right spirit within me! To renounce ourselv's here seems to be but little; to believe in the power of Jesus to restore us to the perfection of holiness, is a greater matter; but the main thing of all is, to be looking, waiting for, longing after, and striving to obtain this perfect holiness. I believe in Jesus to perfect my spirit in holiness, implies indeed a renunciation of all help in myself for it; but then it implies more, namely, that I am expecting it at the hand of Jefus, and it is my grand object and aim that he may purge and purify my foul daily, and at last finish his work, because I earnestly long to be fit for God; to be perfectly like him; to have done with fin for ever; and to be as the bleffed angels, whose souls bear the exactest impression of God's glorious perfections, who fee his face, and are infinitely happy in fulfilling his commandments, and hearkening to the voice of his words. This is the main point. Without this, all pretended belief of the power of Jesus to restore our fallen nature is but fancy and speculation, leaving us, where it found us, in our fallen state, unmeet for God, and what then meet for? Ah! brethren, ye know; ye certainly know. Ye have heard of fallen angels: and what are they meet for? It is for everlasting fire their unholy souls are unfit; and furious as they are, they tremble in the expectation of it. And what? have you no better hope? Is this also your expectation, to have your portion with devils? Sirs, there are but two places that I ever heard of in the eternal world, heaven and hell. Now as many of you as are unholy are not fit for heaven; but ye are fit for hell: ye carry every qualification for it daily about you. You may think what you pleafe, but a spirit that stands

out against God's government, and will not stoop to his law and providence; a spirit of pride and high mindedness, that feeks itself, and takes to itself the praise and glory of every thing; a spirit of ambition, that wants to make a figure, and to hold others in subjection; a spirit of anger, revenge, and bitterness, a spirit of resentment and implacableness; a spirit of envy and jealoufy, is a state of qualification for hell; and what makes any man meet for the fociety of those malignant spirits, who shall be shut up therein for ever, and eternally prevented from vexing any others but their affociates with these horrid dispositions. And are any of us preparing for hell? making ourselves daily more meet for that terrible place? None defignedly; but every foul of us really, who is not feeking after holiness by the power of the Holy Ghost. It is awful to think what a condition many of us are in! For are we all feeking holiness? All of us feeking the mortification of our corrupt affections, and the renewal of our hearts after God's image and likeness? It is impossible. Can it be?— What, when some are mad after pleasure, and some are mad after company, and some are mad after money! When we live in the practice of known fins, and in the neglect of known duties? When we will not bear to be told our faults, or if we must bear to hear them, take no care to mend them? When, in short, it is so evident, that the pursuit of holiness is not our main concern, and any thing that looks like it is but taken up by the bye? Yet furely they have made the better choice, who are feeking the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away; and who, instead of making provision for the flesh to fulfil its lusts, and of laying up treasures upon earth, are preparing for glory, and laying up for their fouls treasures of grace that will never wax old, but endure unto life everlasting. These are they, and these only, who can truly fay, I believe in Jesus. This is one qualification for perfect happiness, namely, perfection of holiness in the foul. 2dly, The other is a spiritualized body, which may not only enjoy perfect health and vigour, but also, instead of being a clog to the foul, as the case now is, may be fitted to assist and serve it in all its holy operations and employments. Such is the now glorified body of Jesus unquestionably, and such shall be the refurrection body of all his faints, for he shall fashion them like unto his glorious body, by his mighty power. this

this point I fay nothing farther at prefent, as it will have a distinct consideration in the end of the Creed. Only suitably to our purpose I remark, that Jesus must give this glorished body; for surely no man can take it up of himself, and that it is what our professor waits for at his hands. The glorious prospect refreshes his spirit under present pain, and approaching dissolution. 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' he is ready to say on every pressing occasion, 'and that he shall stand at the latter day on the earth; and though after my skin, worms

destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.

And when that happy day shall be come, when the last enemy, (glorious thought, the last! therefore Satan shall have been put under my feet before, therefore, sin shall have been destroyed before, therefore all danger of hell shall have been past before) when the last enemy shall be destroyed, then what remains for me but an endless weight of glory? I ' shall see God, I shall see him as he is, I shall be like him, I shall be for ever with the Lord. How glorious then my fervices! I shall fing the fong of the Lamb for ever. I shall rehearle to listening faints the story of my falvation; and provoke attending spirits to join my praises. I shall sit at the feet of my Lord, secure, happy, ravished with unutterable 6 joy everlastingly. Glorious expectation! But when, my foul, fhall these things be? Why, the last enemy is death, and death is near at hand. It is but till death, my foul, and then all thy forrows cease, all behind is glory. Be stedfast, my foul; thy hope is not in vain. O the love, the power of Fefus! Jefus fave me; thou art able to fave me every way; thou art all my falvation. Here I am, Jesus, I believe in thee, as the guide of my feet, as the Lord my righteousness, as the Lord my strength, as my full and final deliverer from all my enemies, I believe in thee; and renouncing all other help, unto thee I commend my foul.'

Let us now collect together the whole, and see in one view what is the full force and meaning of these words, I believe in Jesus. I am a fallen creature, the offspring of sinful Adam, every way wretched and helpless, ignorant, guilty, impotent, and without hope in the future eternal world. But I know there is a Saviour, Jesus, who, I am well assured from the word of God, and from what I am told therein of his person, offices, and transactions, is fully able to help and save me.—

I have

I have heard his free and full invitations, and being encourage ed by them, I do, as my duty is, take him to be my Saviour, renouncing all hope from myself, or any other beside him.-And accordingly I do hereby declare in the presence of God, and of his church, that I avouch Jesus for my Saviour; that I have no allowed dependence on my own wifdom, to instruct me in the things relative to the interests of my foul; but that I do implicitly give myself up to the words of Christ, desiring to be directed into the knowledge of them by the illumination of his Spirit, and determining that however they be above my comprehension, or contrary to my pride and inclinations, I will receive them as the only rule of my faith and practice. I do farther confess, what I stedfastly believe, and whereon I rest my foul, that in the obedience and death of Jesus there is hope alone for poor guilty finners like myfelf; I disclaim all other confidence. I own, in this most public manner, that I have taken refuge in the Redeemer's righteousness; and whatever boldness I now have to call upon God as a Father, or whatever prospect of being with him as my God for ever, it has no other foundation, I defire it may never, and I am fully perfuade d it cannever have any other foundation, than the obedience and death of Jesus. And as I have taken him to be my righteousness, so also to be my strength. I know myself infufficient to any thing good. I afcribe it to Jesus that I am not still dead in trespasses and sins, that I have the least grain of faith in God, or spark of love towards him, in me. I am perfectly fatisfied that without him I can do nothing, and that his grace is fufficient for me. Sincerely desiring deliverance from all fin, and the fanctification of my whole spirit, foul and body, to God's use and glory; I do and desire always, to depend upon him to work this all-effectually upon me by his holy Spirit, waiting for it in prayer, patience, and thankfulnefs .-And finally, I avow him to be all my falvation for the eternal world, to perfect my foul in holiness, to raise my body from the dust, and to give me everlasting life. In the full force and meaning of all which, and of whatever else lies within the scope of his faving power, I say here in the presence of you all, I believe in Jesus.

Now, brethren, can we adopt these words, in this their proper meaning? Ah that we could all of us! how happy fhould we then be! For verily bleffed is he that believeth; you fee

plainly

plainly, that to believe in Jesus is the whole of christianity.—
Therefore to be without this faith, this practical faith, is but
to have at best a name to live. Let us examine our hearts—
Let us prove ourselves, whether we be in the faith. It will
not fail to do us good, one where or other; it will shew us our
hypocrify, if we be infincere; and if we be found faithful upon the trial, what comfort will it not afford us? May the great
God, who made us for his glory, give us grace to believe in
his Son Jesus Christ, to the praise of his name, and to our
eternal salvation, through him the same Jesus Christ our
Lord.

# SERMON XIV.

Acts xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

In speaking to the second branch of the Creed, relative to the Son, and his work of Redemption, I told you that it contained two parts, First, A profession of faith; I believe in Jesus. Secondly, A declaration of the grounds upon which such belief doth stand. The former having been fully spoken to, we enter now on the latter. And the first thing, whereon we profess our belief of the sufficiency of Jesus to save us, is, that we know and are sure that he is Christ, duly set apart, and duly qualified for the office and work of a Saviour.

As to the meaning of the term Christ, it is no other than Anointed, which also the word Messiah signifies. But we must consider the force of the expression, as it belongs to Jesus.—Now it is plain, that he is called Christ, in the New Testament, in an eminent and extraordinary way; so that, though others before him were indeed anointed, yet to none of them beside him is the title Christ applied, as it were for a name whereby to be ordinarily distinguished. And because of this peculiar eminency he is often called, The Christ; which manifestly implies, that he is such in a manner peculiar to himself; as also it denotes an expectation grounded upon promises, that such a Christ in that eminent way, of which all other anointed persons were but shadows and sigures, should appear in the world.

Among the Jews, three forts of persons, *Prophets*, *Priests* and Kings, were solemnly set apart to their respective offices by the ceremony of anointing with oil. In conformity with which, the Saviour, in whom the whole design of the Jewish

constitution centred, in whom it was to have its intended issue, and who was to execute all these three offices, in the whole saving discharge of them, unto the Church, must of necessity also be anointed thereunto. As a prophet, he was to reveal the whole will of God; as a Priest, he was to make satisfaction and intercession for sin; as a King, he was to gather, govern, and protect his people. Upon his full discharge of of which offices depends the whole success of his mediatorial undertaking, both as the glory of God and our salvation are concerned in it.

Confider the peculiarity of this undertaking, and you will fee the necessity of his being authoritatively appointed unto it, as also furnished for it. The matter stands thus: Man by Adam's fin was fallen from God. Hereby, on the one side, divine Majesty had suffered an insult, which could not be passed over, consistently with the glory due thereto, without a reparation made to it, and which, whether it should be made at all in behalf of the offender, and of what kind it should be, lay intirely in the will of God, the injured party; and, on the other part, through the same apostaly, there was such a departure as amounted to downright enmity against God; man was as unwilling to come to any terms of accommodation with his Maker, as he was unable to find out any; or should he have found them, to perform the condition of them, in any manner that would at once comport with God's glory and his own falvation. Perfectly to heal this breach, was to be the business of a Mediator; and you find his business was to make God fatisfaction for the wrong done him; and to prevail with man to accept of an offer of peace made by God, in confideration of that fatisfaction, and to return to his place and duty. In which views it is manifest, that he must be duly authorised to make a satisfaction for the offender which God would accept, (for it must needs be made according to God's pleasure, and in fuch a way as he could be content with) and then, not only must he be authorised to make this satisfaction, but also in God's name to declare and publish God's having accepted it, and his inviting, and commanding all men to come unto it: nor is this all, he must have authority also to confer the whole benefits of this fatisfaction on fuch as should feek to have the blesfing of it. But, not only must he be thus endued with proper authority on God's part, he must have also a power to

work on the hearts of men, to bring them to see the misery of their apostate state, to relieve them from, and encourage them against their fears that must necessarily rise upon such a difcovery, by the application of his fatisfaction; and finally, to change their hearts unto a love of God, who is naturally the object of their hatred, into a complacency in him, and chearfulness in serving him. All this is in fewer words, he must be a Priest, to make satisfaction for sinners to the glory of God, and an Interceffor, through whom they may have free access. unto him, without difgrace done to his most holy Majesty by their unworthiness, and without discouragement, on their part, because of it; he must be a Prophet, to declare, in the Name of God, the falvation he hath procured; to convince men in their hearts of their absolute want of it, and of its sufficiency to relieve them: he must be a King, to confer authoritatively this falvation upon all that humbly fue for it, to defend them from their enemies, and to maintain a spiritual dominion in their hearts. Upon these considerations it appears, that he must be duly authorised for his mediatorial work, and also duly qualified. That he was both the one and the other, both folemnly confecrated unto it, and fully fitted for it, being anointed King, Priest and Prophet for this very purpose, you declare when you fay, I believe in Jesus the Christ. Wherein you profess your belief of these two things relative to, and implied in his anointing, as together constituting him an authorifed, qualified, and ample Mediator for the exercise of his Kingly, Prophetic, and Sacerdotal work, and the fulfilment of God's defign, respecting his own glory, in that transaction.

First, That he was folemnly confecrated, inaugurated, and fet apart to this work, according to the purpose of God before the worlds were, and according to the tenor of the covenant of redemption, by the express designation and open declaration of the Father, whereby he was publicly sealed and invested Prophet, Priest and King, and God's commissioning him thereto, with full power and authority, was avowed and declared. That he was thus confecrated hereunto, you have been taught to believe from God's testimony to this very thing, as by the many wonderful works that he wrought by him, and in confirmation of his mission, so especially, by that open declaration, at the time of his baptism, when the Spirit like a dove descended and lighted upon him; and lo a voice from

'heaven, faying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well 'pleased.' A testimony which our Lord himself afterwards refers to, as fully declarative of his commission, as being nothing less than God's seal put unto it, for the conviction of the world, that he came fully empowered: Labour for that meat which endureth unto eternal life, which the Son of mansshall

give unto you; for him hath God the Father sealed.

Decondly, Besides his confectation, you believe also his qualification, as the other thing implied in his anointing. And this is his receiving in his human nature the fulness of the Holy Ghost, which, you are expressly affured, was given to him without measure, John iii. 34. Hereby he was furnished with every gift and every grace that could possibly be needful to the discharge of all and every part of his work, as to what related to his human nature therein, to offer himself freely, and without spot unto God, to declare the whole will of God, and to attend upon the ministrations thereof with the demonstrative illumination of the Spirit to direct, affist, sanctify, and build up his people unto a meetness for the heavenly inheritance. In short, as he was constituted and consecrated to the office of a Saviour, by the defignation and declaration of the Father, fo was he by him furnished and qualified by the unlimited bestowment of every gift and grace of the Spirit neceffary thereto. And in both these together consists his anointing. From the nature of his office, as one who was to mediate between God and his apostate creatures, neither of them could be wanting; his confectation and his qualification must go hand in hand. Had he not acted in God's name, and been invested with his authority, his qualifications and actions would have been without divine warrant; and had he been only authorised, and not furnished, he had been unequal to the work he was fent to perform. Happy for us that his commission and qualification are so ample; and that we have the testimony of scripture, (I might say also of experience) that our Saviour Jesus is fully authorised, and fitted to teach us as our Prophet; to atone and intercede for us as our Priest; and to rule and defend us as our King.

But now, brethren, we may know all this, and yet come utterly short of the full meaning and purpose of this word, Christ, here in the Creed. The person here speaking is supposed to have entered into the design of this unction or anoint-

ing, and in some measure to have his heart and conduct in conformity with it. Does he fay, I believe Jefus was folemnly authorised and amply fitted to teach me the will of God, that I should pay no manner of regard to it, remain in ignorance of it through my own carelessness, or proudly dispute the truth of what he fays? Does the believer declare, I know Jefus was constituted and qualified to make atonement for fin, that I should make no manner of use of that atonement, either flanding upon my own righteousness, or never seriously considering my finfulness and misery, that I may seek the benefit of his? Is Jefus, does he fay, ordained a King, and furnished with every kingly requifite, that I should remain ferving my lufts, opposing his kingdom, and growing daily more ripe for destruction, in the increasing hardness and impenitency of my heart? These you see are flat contradictions to a true belief of the unction of Jesus unto his offices. The very reverse is the true spirit of faith. 'And when the real believer says, 'I believe in Jesus the anointed,' he takes comfort from the perfuafion, which the affured confecration and qualification of Jefus give him, of his power to fave; and honeftly defires, that he may partake of his faving help in all those offices unto which he is thus anointed.

You fee then the full purport and meaning of the word Christ, as it stands connected with Jesus, must be this; I believe in Jesus as my only Saviour,' (for it has been observed, that the word Jesus must be carried forward to every point following in this fecond branch of the Creed) 'and I believe in him as my Saviour, to deliver me from darkness, guilt, and fin, among other reasons afterwards to be mentioned, first of all for this, because I know him to be Christ, designed and fet apart by God, and fully furnished for his office. ' And feeing God hath appointed, and fitted him to be a Proophet, Priest, and King to me, I do desire always to give hoonour unto God's appointment herein; and, at the fame time, to ascribe all the glory I can to my Saviour, thus constituted and fealed by the Father, as well as furnished by the fulness of the Holy Ghost, by yielding myself with all reverence, humility, and submission unto his teaching, righteousness, and grace; holding it my greatest present blessing to partake of his unction in all these respects, and desiring and designing to wait perfeveringly upon him in all his appointed ways, 6 that

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that I may continually receive grace for grace out of his fulness; till, in the faithful discharge of all his offices towards me, he

bring me to his everlasting kingdom. And this is my mean-

ing, when I make my profession and say, I believe in Jesus

· Christ.

Well now, and what fay our hearts to this? Is this the real fentiment we have within us? Do we honestly desire to be thus minded towards Jesus, considered as the anointed of God? I will endeavour to shew a little how you may know if this is not your case; and then I will help you to see how far it is your case; and conclude with certain encouraging thoughts arising from the unction of Jesus.

I. I will endeavour a little to shew you how you may know if this is not your case. And this most certainly it is not,

First, If you have never deeply found the want of a Saviour; for then it is impossible you should have received him whom God has fent to you with full authority and ample qualification. Now of fuch there are doubtless very many in the world, and without question in this congregation. Christ found many of that stamp in his days, people who were whole, and did not need him who was come to feek and fave that which was loft. If you have been fatisfying yourfelf with comparisons, if you have been staying yourself upon an outward decency, if you have never entered into the depths of your own heart, and are a stranger, whether to the fact of your fallen nature, or to the evil of it, and the danger of that estate; if you have not been brought to inquire, what you should do to be faved from an infelt experience of your exceeding vileness, and with a real concern, in respect of which every earthly thing appeared to you worthy of no confideration; if you have gone on with the multitude, and thought nothing of these serious matters, leaving them to visionaries and enthusiasts, as you were ready to account such as were seriously concerned for their eternal interests: in any of these cases it is most manifest you have not come to Jesus the anointed; and the longer you have lived, the more you have added to the prejudices of your heart against Christ's word, to the obstinacy of your heart against his law, and to the size of your guilt against the day of recompence unto such as obey not the gospel. You who have not found the want of a Saviour, can never have received him as the Christ of God. Nor,

2. Though you have feemingly found the want of him in

the power of an enlightened, and fomething awakened conscience, but have not received him, as God has sent and furnished him, to be a Prophet, Priest, and King to you, still you cannot say truly, I believe in Jesus the Christ. Nothing in the world can be plainer than this. For only fee. Who is your Teacher? What, Christ? Does his word stand really for every thing with you, and outweigh every thing, the custom of the world, the wisdom of the world, the learning of the world; fo that, if that fays it, you make no great account of what never fo many can fay against it, running directly counter to all that run contrary to your Bible, and bringing every thing to the law and the testimony, to prove it whether it be right or wrong? Is Christ your Priest? Are you crying unto him, 'Lord fave me, Lord plead for me, for I am vile, I am unworthy, I cannot stand before this holy Lord God; I am nothing but fin and mifery, and yet I would onot be cast out of his presence, that were very hell, and in-' finitely worse than any thing I could suffer here?" What, is this your daily, your importunate cry? And is Christ your King? What, do you own no King but Jesus? Are all your lusts put in subjection under his feet, and do you loyally endeavour they may be kept so, not your most convenient, most pleasing sin excepted? Is it your constant cry, that he may keep you from all iniquity, may fanctify you wholly, and maintain an undisturbed dominion in you, and over you? Can you fay this? If you can, you are not the person I am speaking to. But if you cannot, and you know nothing of all I have been declaring, it is plain the unction of Jesus has not reached unto you, and that you do not believe in him as your Christ. But.

II. I would shew you how far you have received him as God's anointed. It is supposed you have found the want of him in his offices, and that you are so far persuaded of his sufficiency, as to have submitted yourself to him, to be taught, saved, and ruled by him; that your case therefore is not like that of those I have just been speaking to. You are in the number of true believers, and would know how far you are gone in receiving Jesus as the Christ of God. You may know it two ways.

1. By the honour and reverence you pay him, confidered as bearing God's authority towards you, that is, as being confecrated by God to be a Prophet, Priest, and King unto you.

How

How far do you reverence God's authority in the offices of Jesus? I will tell you how far. It is just as far as you hear him speaking unto you with a humble, meek, attentive, and teachable spirit; just as far as you dare not question his merits, and dare not trust on your own; just as far as you find his commands to be decisive, and submitted to without gainfaying, at all events. For as the unbeliever shews his irreverence of God's authority in the person of the Anointed, by paying him no regard in the offices, so you may be sure, the more you do the contrary, the more your soul is brought into a submissive and lowly estate before him, so much the more you honour him, as the sealed of the Father. Then,

2. You may also know your measure herein, by the use you make of Jesus, considered as qualified to be a Prophet,. Priest, and King to you. The more diligent you are in hearkning to the words of his mouth, keeping them in your heart, pondering upon them, and waiting, in all prayer, for his Spirit to enlighten you in the knowledge of them; the more frequent, ready, and confident you are in applying to his obedience and intercession, under the fight of all your fins; the more resolute and constant you are in suing for his grace, to keep you in temptations, to rid you from corruptions, to fubdue in you the whole body of fin, to maintain and increase in you the bleffed graces of faith, hope, and charity; fo much the more you evidently receive him, as qualified by God to be a Prophet, Priest, and King towards you. There is no disputing so plain a thing on one fide or other. It is our practice must shew our progress. In the measure we thus use Christ, we receive him in his offices. And let us beware that neither Satan be allowed to make us deny a plain matter of fact on one fide, nor felf-flattery prevail with us to believe a lie on the other.

And now, my friends, we see how the matter stands with us in respect of Christ's unction. As our case is, let us take encouragement to come unto Jesus, they who are far off, and they who are nigh, from this comfortable and delightful thought that he is Christ, the anointed of God, the commissioned and qualified Prophet, and Priest, and King. Sirs, in these offices there is full supply of all our wants; there is not one case of any poor sinner that is not here provided for. I defy, in the name of Jesus, guilt to make any charge, unbelief to raise any objections, the habit of fin to set up any claim, the

law to denounce any fentence; death, judgment, and hell together to prefent any terrors, which Jesus is not able to remove. O my brethren, it was even because we were thus guilty, finful, miserable, ignorant, helpless, that Jesus was anointed to be a Saviour. What stands in our way to glory? It is guilt, it is fin, it is blindness, it is Satan. Why here is the Christ, the constituted, the qualified Prophet, Priest, and King; and therefore anointed, because we needed such an one What mean we then to loiter? Who can be against us? God is for us; it is manifest, our Christ is a complete Saviour. Let not then your hands hang down in any cafe. Come to the Saviour; the Anointed of the Lord. Why will ye stand off from him who is come to fave you? What, because ye have long refifted and refused to obey him? What, because ye are very guilty? What, because Satan has long had dominion over you? Still I fay, Come, for Jesus is Christ. And O what a comfort to every believing foul, that God has thus commissioned and qualified Jesus! such a Mediator between God and man; so appointed of the Father; so furnished by the Spirit; fuch a Teacher, King, and Priest! Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we know and are fure that thou art Christ. O how joyfully should we say these words of Peter! how consident should our faith be, when we say one before another, I believe in Jefus the Christ!

## SERMON XV.

AcTs xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

IN explaining the fecond branch of the Creed, we have already confidered what it is to believe in Jefus; and have begun to illustrate the grounds upon which our firm confidence in him, as our all-fufficient Saviour, is fixed, and stands unshaken; to wit, in the first place, because he is Christ, anointed to this work by the Father. The second thing upon which we build our faith in Jesus as our sufficient Saviour, comes now to be spoken to, in opening the words that follow,

His only Son.

In order to the explication of this point, it is altogether needful to observe, that the divinity of our Lord is not a matter of speculation, or a mere doctrinal position, but that on which the fufficiency of Jesus as a Saviour does most eminently depend. If a Saviour be wanted, it is necessary that the person who undertakes the work should be fit for it; nor can any, who are truly fenfible of the want of falvation in this fallen state of ours, possibly betrust themselves to one that offers it to them, until they be furely convinced, on good grounds, that he is able to give it them. If the Saviour be infufficient, the attempt fails; and unless the sinner be persuaded of the Saviour's fufficiency, he cannot depend upon him. You fee, therefore, how far the point before is from being speculation; that the inquiry into the truth of it should be entered into with the concern which its importance to our fouls gives it; and that they who, incompetently fensible of the want of a

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Saviour, do address themselves to search thereinto, must neceffarily either receive it as a mere notion, or reject it as abfurd and impossible. The person who is really sensible of his fallen finful estate, and duly concerned about being set at liberty from the alarming apprehensions which it has begotten in him respecting a future world, is the only one that can profitably inquire into this mysterious truth, ' that Jesus is the Son of God;' and it is his belief of that which can alone support him in his prefent circumstances, with confidence, hope, and peace. If Jesus be the only-begotten of the Father, his mediatorial fufficiencies cannot be questioned, and he must needs be able to fave to the uttermost. It remains only, that the felf-condemned sinner be satisfied he is so; and when he has affuredly learnt this, not from man, but from that word which he is incontestably convinced is God's, he grows eafy, and without the least hesitation of heart cries out, 'Truly in the Lord have I righteousness. Now I know, and am sure, that all who believe in thee shall not perish, but have ever-" lasting life."

To come therefore to the plain force of this expression, as it stands here in the Creed, which amounts to this, "I believe in Jesus, because he is the only "Son of the Father." And

when I fay this, I intend these three things.

First, That I verily believe him to be the only Son of the Father.

Secondly, That fince I know him to be so, I cannot doubt of

his power to fave.

Thirdly, And that therefore I do both confidently rely upon him, and also humbly yield myself up unto him, to be saved

by him in all respects.

First, I verily believe him to be the only Son of the Father. And for this I have the plainest evidences, and such as give me the fullest satisfaction, however the co-existence of the three Persons in the one undivided divine effence, is above my comprehension; and however mysterious is the generation of this only-begotten Son from all eternity of the Father. For I find him continually called in Scripture the Son, the only-begotten Son, the Son of God, the only-begotten of the Father; and I am taught to understand these expressions in the most proper, and simple sense, by many other expressions which distinguish him from

all others that are called fons, and plainly stile him God; declaring, that He was in the beginning with God, and was God; that he was in the form of God; that he is the true God; and fetting him out as the object of faith and worship, together with the Father and the Holy Ghost. In conformity with which accounts of his divine nature, I find both the works and perfections of divinity ascribed to this only-begotten Son, who is expressly faid to be the Creator of all things; inasmuch as the world was made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made; to be the Preserver of all things, forasmuch as it is he who is upholding all things by the word of his power; to be the living God, in him was life; to be Omnipotent, seeing whatfoever things the Father doth, the same doth the Son likewise; to be Omnipresent, for where two or three are met together in my Name, there fays he, am I in the midst of them; to be, finally, a fearcher of hearts; for he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man; and more expressly does he affert of himself, I am he who jearcheth the reins and the heart, and I will give unto every one according to their works, Rev. xi. 23. Finding therefore those works and properties ascribed unto him, which I know nevertheless to be peculiar to God, I am farther determined in what fense I am to take those expressions which speak of him as the only begotten of the Father, and as God; not the same person with the Father, for then there would be neither Father nor Son; and yet I see evidently, of the same effence and perfections with him; fo that, unless I should say, there are two Gods, I cannot deny him and the Father to be one. Nor do I find any thing to lessen my belief of his being the proper and eternal Son of God, when I confider him in his office capacity of Redeemer, affuming our nature, and thereby becoming Jesus. On the contrary, I fee him putting forth fuch acts of divinity, even in his estate of humiliation, as fusficiently testify to his being the Son of God. Struck with the incontestable evidence, one could not help crying out, ' Rabbi, thou art the Son of God;' and another, 'My Lord and my God;' and two others, in the name of all, 'We know and are fure that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.— And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.'-I fee him manifested to be the Son of God, by all the riches of wisdom and knowledge that shone forth in him; by his mighty mighty words and works; by the submission which all creatures, when he pleased, were enforced to pay him; by a thousand circumstances in his life; yet more by the manner of his death; more still by his raising himself from the dead; most of all by his actual and evident dominion at the right hand of God; from whence I behold him exerting such acts of power upon the hearts of men, and especially my own; watching over his church with such infinite love, directing every the minutest circumstance, attending all the members of it with such absolute wisdom, and displaying such acts of divine power; that, upon the whole, I am still more convincingly satisfied, by his mediatorial transactions, of his being in very deed

the Son of God.—And therefore,

Secondly, Knowing him to be the only Son of God, I cannot doubt of his power to fave. I fee evidently, that falvation must be the work of God, who alone can open the blind eyes of apostate minds, alone can justify the ungodly, and by whose alone power it is that fouls spiritually dead can be raifed to spiritual life, and restored to the divine image and likeness again, that body of fin, which now so dreadfully works in them, being utterly destroyed. To shine into the heart with supernatural and divine light, to justify the ungodly, to fanctify the unholy, must be God's works: for they are appropriated to God alone. And here I fee God himfelf effeeting them by the only Son, who has graciously condescended to this task, and having taken our nature into his own, he himself, in that union, is become a Prophet, Priest, and King, for our full falvation. Can I dispute then his fufficiency in this mediatorial character? Not while I know him to be the only-begotten of the Father. That one word filences all objection. To fay, that he is God come to fave us, and yet to fay, that he is not able to fave us, is a blasphemy I tremble at. Can I fay that he made all things, and at the fame time queftion if he be able to restore all things? Does he uphold the world by his power, and yet has he not might enough to fave a worm? Did he come down from heaven to work falvation, and shall his undertaking fail? What should, what could frustrate it? Was he unable to answer the demands of infinite justice? What, when the blood which purchased the church was the blood of God? Was he ignorant of the counfels of the Father's will, when, 'from all eternity he was by him,

of the Father,' when 'in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge?' Should the opposition of sin, satan, men death, hell, hinder? O how sufficient above all such difficulties is this God our Saviour? Here lies my chief ground of faith, I know Jesus to be the only Son of God, and, with the Father and the Spirit, one God. Knowing this, I avow the merit of all he did and suffered; I avouch every gracious word of his mouth to be yea and amen; his promises to be unchangeable; his charge to be divine; I proclaim him mighty to save, the artifice of Satan, and the whole force of earthly allurement, interest, ease, custom, reproach, stand in the way. All-sufficiency is in Jesus, because he is the only Son

of the Father. And hereupon,

Thirdly, I do folemnly declare, that knowing him to be an all-fufficient Saviour, because the only begotten Son of God, I do rely upon him, in all respects, with the fullest confidence; and humbly yield myself up to him, to be faved by him in all his offices. I know his power, and do not distrust him in any wife, but leaning affuredly on what he has faid, I do not fear condemnation, though I am a finner; nor question his perfecting the work of holiness which he has begun in me, though I am fo full of corruption; I look forward to the day of his appearing with boldness, and wait for it with long expectation; I lay my hand on everlafting life as my portion, and tread death and hell under my feet, as rifen with my incarnate God; I defy every enemy present and to come, and say unto the Lord, Thou art my God. I know whom I have believed, and being fully persuaded that he is very God, I have committed, and do commit my whole felf to his keeping, humbly and reverently waiting for his faving help from day to day, that he may shew me more and more of his divine glory and unsearchable love, to the end that I may rejoice more abundantly in the efficacy of his obedience and death, and may be changed into the fame image, from glory to glory, by his almighty Spirit. And this my confidence in him, and submisfion to him, I mean to declare, when I fay, I believe in Jefus his only Son.

Let us come now to some necessary considerations arising

from this point. As,

First, We should observe the peculiar influence which our believing Jesus to be, in his heavenly nature, the Son of God, has unto our faith in him as a fufficient Saviour. I fay the peculiar influence: for though indeed all the grounds upon which this faith stands, and which are particularly pointed out in this branch of the Creed, be absolutely necessary unto that faith, fo that not one of them can be disbelieved consistently therewith; yet in the present point there is this peculiar and eminent, that it is the life of all the rest, giving merit and efficacy to all the Mediator's transactions, and without which he could not be that Saviour he is. The divinity of Jesus standing confirmed, there is a power in his offices, life, death, refurrection, exaltation, and approaching coming, which faith can take hold of with confidence. But take this away, and what remains? What great difference between him and that other mediator, Moses, who prefigured him? What difference in their teaching? Jesus could only reveal more of God's will than his forerunner; but to teach the heart, Moses and he would be equally infufficient. What difference in their facrifices? There was no merit in those of Moses, to take away fin, neither in this case would there be in Jesus, to satisfy the demands of infinite injured justice. And as to dominion, what power in Jesus more than Moses, to know, convert, and govern the hearts of men; to fanctify their corrupted nature, or to defeat, and over-rule the fecret or open attempts of the devil, if he be not God? Take away the divinity of Jesus, and you cut off his right hand that he cannot help you, and therewith all your confidence in him as able to help you. Indeed, if you are not fensible of your fallen state, a Saviour who is not God may ferve your turn; if it be not abfurd to call him a Saviour, when you find no faving work for him to do; and when from him, as you find not that you want any thing elfe, fo you expect nothing more than that he should come commissioned from God to fix a perfect system of morals, and to declare beforehand what the iffue will be of your conforming to or neglecting them. And truly this is the way of fuch as deny the divinity of Christ. They deny or diminish to a mere nothing the corruption of our nature. Hence they know not what the real state of man now is, nor consequently the need of divine illumination, remission of sins, and a change of heart; fo being unacquainted with what indeed made a Saviour necessary, they can have no dependence upon him for the effectual discharge of his offices to them; and of course, when they set themselves to determine about the divinity of Christ, can only judge of it as a matter of mere speculation and orthodoxy. They begin at the wrong end; and while they know not themselves, are void of that spirit of meekness which prepares the mind for divine discoveries: and no wonder if they quarrel with that doctrine of the Trinity as unintelligible and incomprehensible, which to those who truly know the want of salvation, is incontestably evident in the scriptures, and the whole ground of their considence, hope, and tri-

umph.

Secondly, We should observe the exceeding sinfulness and danger of a state of unbelief. By a state of unbelief is meant that condition of foul wherein people, through the hardness of their hearts, do either carelessly neglect, or wilfully refuse the gospel. Brethren, are there no fouls here in this condition? If ye all know yourselves to be such sinners, that ye dare not look up to God but through Jesus Christ, and are yet putting forth the strength given to you, that he may be a Saviour unto you, concerned about this more than all things besides, then there are none fuch in this affembly. But alas! is it so? Would to God it were fo. O what a happy day would it then be for all of us! I mistake myself greatly, if all the things in the world together would give me fuch happiness. Ah, firs! ye are committed to my care; your fouls are intrusted unto me; and can I be easy while I see any of you out of the road of heaven? Why will ye be angry with me? Do I wrong you by wishing you happy; happy beyond all that tongue can speak, or heart can think, eternally, gloriously happy; seated on the hills of paradife, and every foul of you with a crown of glory on his head, and I among and amidst you, my dear people? What shall I do? shall I leave you to yourselves? What, shall I betray your fouls, and leave you quietly in the hands of the devil? How would you then curse me at last, how justly would you then curfe me, and call for vengeance on my unfaithful head? 'This was our minister: He did not warn us; he did not tell us of our danger: he did not care what became of our fouls; he forebore to tell us plainly what the end would be, through fear of our displeasure. Justice, Jeofus, thou righteous Judge, we demand justice upon him for

e perished fouls through his cowardice and neglect.' Ah firs! I would willingly fee you all at the right hand of Jefus. I would not, no, I would not have one word delivered by me to any foul of you rife up in judgment against you. What shall I fay? Are ye all believers? Gracious God, that thy word should have been preached so many years together in this place to fo little purpose! What? All believers? The marks of an unbelieving state to be found on none? Whence then fo much drunkenness, and idle company keeping? whence so much covetousness and care after the world? whence so much pleafure and vanity? I fay fo much pleafure and vanity; for fince I knew you, you are grown exceedingly addicted to pleafure and vanity. It is but a very few years ago that this place was remarkable for gravity in dress; but is it so at present? You know it is not. There are many of you that spoil one another. And I fee many of the lower fort who are as fond as their betters of making a figure this way Now faith is certainly a ferious thing. I wish you would all try your hearts. While we are following the vain pomp and glory of the world, the covetous defires of the fame, or the carnal defires of the flesh, can we have faith? No, it cannot be. And yet I must tell you, that to be in a state of unbelief is terrible. Judge of it only from this word of the apostle, 'If the word spoken by anegels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward, how shall we escape, if we neglect fo great falvation?' And again, 'For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that fpeaketh from heaven, that is, from the only Son of God. God faid, 'I will fend my Son unto them, it may be they will reverence my Son.' But when they would not, then it follows, 'What shall God do to them? He shall miserably deftroy them.' But,

Thirdly, We should all of us honour the Son more than we do. His honour and our profit are inseparable. Had we higher thoughts of his glory, as the only-begotten of the Father in a mediatorial capacity, we should not be so apt to mistrust him as we do, through remaining unbelief, because of our sinfulness, the power of our enemies, the depth of our corruptions, the darkness of our own minds, and the suggestions of the devil. To honour the Son is to exalt him in our

hearts

hearts as an all-fufficient Saviour. This is his proper glory, as Mediator. And the way to it is, to keep closer to him, to think oftner of him, and to behold, and look more abundantly upon his glory as the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Nor shall our labour herein be without reward. Our faith will grow more lively; our hope of beholding his glory in heaven more ardent; our souls will be more peaceful; our fears of death die away; our love of this world be mortified. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? There is the conquering faith. Strive hard for it. Let Jesus dwell in our hearts, and our hearts will be changed from day to day; see then, that ye pay increasing honour to Jesus the Son of God.

# SERMON XVI.

#### Acrs xvi. 30. 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

Am now to speak of Jesus, as our Lord, which will afford us another important ground of our faith in him. And the addition of his being our Lord will be found, in connection with what he has been already seen to be, a substantial foundation of all confidence in Jesus. As Christ, he is amply furnished for the work of salvation; as the only Son, his sufficiency in that work is incontestable; and being our

Lord, he acts therein with fovereign authority.

In treating this point, we must needs proceed as with the foregoing, considering it in a practical manner, inasmuch as Jesus's being our Lord cannot be a thing of speculation, but that on which our considence in him, as acting with all authority, is indisputably determined. That he is so, that he transacts all his mediatorial work with absolute power and plenary authority, we all profess to believe, as a sure ground of our considence in his salvation, when we say, I believe in Jesus our Lord. Wherein we declare this much,

First, I believe Jesus to be the Lord of all things by his na-

ture, as the only Son of God.

Secondly, Therefore I believe him qualified to be, what he is,

Lord of all things by constitution, as the son of man.

Thirdly, As the fon of man I know that he hath exercised, and believe that he both doth and will exercise an absolute dominion over all things. Wherefore,

Fourthly, I humbly subject myself to his saving power in all

respects. I do considertly trust upon Jesus as authoritatively executing all his offices. I quietly wait upon him for the performance of all salvation to me. And as the subject of his dominion, I desire to own and honour him as my Lord and the Lord of all things, by a dutiful use of myself and my gifts, by a public profession of his name in the world, and by keeping

my body and spirit for him to death and judgment

First, I believe Tefus to be the Lord of all things by his nature, as the only Son of God. For as I know him to be the proper Son of the Father, and fee all the works and perfections which are proper to God ascribed to him; so I find him bearing those titles, which as they are incommunicable, so also expressive of absolute independency, and consequently of the dependence of all things upon God. Thus in the Old Testament he is frequently called Jehovah (which signifies the root and fountain of all existence, or very being itself) and that in fuch passages where the Father and the Son being equally stiled by this very name Jehovah, there is no room left me to doubt that the Son is Jehovah, as well as and with the Father. Thus I read in Zech. x. 12. I will strengthen them in the Lord (in the original it is Jehovah) and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord (Jehovah). And in Hof. i. 7. I (Jehovah) will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will fave them by the Lord (Jehovah) their God, and will not fave them by bow nor by fword.' And in the New Testament he is known to me by the same title univerfally, the Lord being a name there continually given him; while also it is not disputed, that the Lord and Febovah are but the fame word in two different languages, which expresses that independency of God, by which he must needs have all creatures in dependence upon him, holding dominion over all things. Wherefore,

Secondly, Knowing him to be Lord of all things by nature, as the Son of God, the Creator and upholder of all, I do believe him qualified to be what he is, the Lord of all things by constitution, as the Son of man. Redemption I know to be a work beyond the power of any son of man, who is not also the son of God: but when I see upon whose shoulders the government is laid, even upon that Son of man who is assumed into union with the mighty God, the wonderful Counseller, I see it placed where it belongs, and in hands that are able to support

it with honour, and to exercise it with power. And accordingly, as I know him thus qualified for dominion, fo I believe him to be constituted Lord of all things, as Mediator, by the express appointment of the Father; whereof I am affured in numberless scriptures, where I am told, God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, according to what was declared before concerning him, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. Of this grant I hear him speaking himself; All things are delivered unto me of my Father. And again, The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands; and the apostle, triumphing in the truth of this dominion, God hath made this same Jesus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ; and God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Here is plainly declared to me the extensiveness of his dominion, as it is also yet more fully in other places: He hath set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come .-Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy Thou hast put all things in subjection under him; for in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not but under him. Neither do I find this dominion of Jefus less ample as to continuance, than complete in largeness; 'Of his kingdom there shall be no end, his throne is for ever and ever, his dominion an everlafting dominion, which shall not pass away; and his kingdom that which shall not be destroy-« ed." And,

Thirdly, As I find him to have been thus conflituted Lord of all things as the Son of man, fo I find farther that he actually exercised the dominion that was committed to him, while he was upon earth, in an authoritative manner, though not with that fulness of power and dominion, wherewith, in reward of his death, he was invested after his resurrection, when God put all things under his feet. His taking possession of the kingdom in the whole glory and exercise of it, was referved to the solemn day of his session at the right hand of

God:

God: but yet he exercised his dominion in a royal manner, and with fupreme authority while he was upon earth. Thus I hear him faying to the winds and fea, ' Peace, be still; and 6 immediately there was a great calm.' I hear him commanding the Lame to walk, and fuddenly they take up their bed. I find him giving fight to the Blind at a word; and I hear him speaking to the Dead, and they arise. Nay I behold him exerting his dominion in such acts as are more proper to the nature of his kingdom, as a Spiritual government; he cast out Devils at a word, and impowered his Disciples to do the same.— Master, even the Devils are subject to us through thy Name.' He faid to one and another, 'Thy fins are forgiven thee,' that it might be known he 'had power on earth to forgive fins.' He exerted acts of divine power upon the hearts of men, Follow me: turned the hearts of some; and such a majesty was felt in his preaching, that fuch as would not believe could not help confessing, 'never man spake like this Man.' But his whole dominion was referved till his inauguration at the right hand of the throne of God. Then he wrought to make his power to be known. I fee the exalted Jesus to be Lord of all things. Lord of gifts; what an effusion of them was there at Pentecost? And of graces; what zeal, what boldness, did the cowardly Fishermen obtain in a moment! Then he proved himself the Lord of mens hearts. How many were made obedient to the faith in one day, of those very persons upon whom the word of Jesus in person had proved inefficacious! I see the wisdom of man, and the prince of darkness, bowing every where before the throne of Jesus. I see attending Angels executing his commissions, when he will fave the life of an apostle, and the foul of a Jailer. I fee Death disarmed of all his terrors, the world of all its power, while fuffering Saints look up to heaven and fay, Lord Jesus receive my Spirit. What is become of the rage of men, the awe of councils, the dread of judgement-feats? The power of Jesus has disarmed them all. His fervants are made strong by his arm, they only triumph while their Judges are confounded. How did the number of Disciples increase, Gentiles as well as Jews became obedient to the faith, and opposition only ferved to illustrate the reign of Immanuel! And to this day is his arm shortened? Every where there are they who own the power of Jesus, who confess him mighty to save, upon their own experience. 'What

opower hath he not exerted upon my heart?' (doth our Believer fay) 'I was blind, and he opened my eyes. I was dead in fin, and he quickened me. I was enflaved by Satan, and he fet me free. He carried me in his arms, clike a lamb of the flock, nor fuffered the roaring lion to make me his prey. He taught me to go. He held up my goings. He would not fuffer me to be tempted above my strength. He gently raised me up when I fell. He brought me into a place of liberty, and spake comfortably to me. He brought down my deadly enemies, fin and the world, under me .-He has given me a glorious hope, and I know, that when this ' tabernacle shall be dissolved, he hath prepared for me a house eternal in the heavens. He hath taken away the sting of death, and hath caused me to wait till my change comes.-But what, am I the only living instance of the almighty ' power of Jesus? Who then are these that walk in the light, that are turned unto God, that are renouncing all and folclowing Jesus, that have their hope full of immortality, upon whom the Devil, the World, and the Flesh have no power to hurt them? who has begotten these? who keeps them? who fets their faces like flint, that they are not ashamed? 'Thine is the kingdom, exalted Jesus! I see, I own it; and of thy dominion there is no end. We wait for thy fecond coming with power and great glory, to put all thine enemies and ours under thy feet for ever, destroying death, and casting finners and devils into hell by the breath of thy mouth; and to complete the salvation of thy people, raising them up in glorified bodies like thine own, re-uniting them to their perfected fouls, giving them the irreversible difcharge, and declaring them, with fovereign authority, the everlasting partakers of thy joy and kingdom. Then, glorious Lord, when thou shalt have put down all rule and authority and power, when all things shall have been put under thy feet, shalt thou deliver up the kingdom which thou didst exercise on earth, to God, even the Father; and thou fhalt fit down to reign for ever, over thy people whom thou hast purchased and redeemed, and they shall reign with thee for ever and ever. And now therefore being thus fully fa-'tisfied respecting the dominion of Jesus, I declare, Fourthly, 'That I humbly subject myself to his faving pow-

er in all respects. That I confidently trust upon him as au-

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thoritatively executing all his offices towards me. That I quietly wait upon him for the performance of all falvation to me. And that, as the subject of his kingdom, I desire to own him as my Lord, and the Lord of all things by a dutiful use of my-felf and my gifts, by a public profession of his name in the world, and by keeping my body and spirit for him to death and judgment. All which things I regard as important branches of my believing in Jesus, as the Lord of all things; and any of which being omitted in my desire and endeavour, I cannot be truly come to Jesus as my Saviour, nor have considence in him as such, because I am without one of the grounds on which his faving power stands, the belief of his being our Lord.'

It may be proper to touch upon each of these points, as the

time will permit.

First, Seeing I know Jesus to be Lord of all things, I do humbly fubmit myself to his faving power in all respects. He is constituted of God a Saviour, and as such I humbly defire to receive him, as fully commissioned, absolutely impowered, and amply qualified to fave me. The words of his mouth can want no authority, and I would implicitly fubmit to them; as the Lord, having the government on his shoulders, he has authority to absolve me from the sentence of death, and bid me live, through the merit of his obedience unto death: To him therefore I would come, and receive my pardon at his hands; and having all things in his power, he can fanctify my heart, and keep me from all the power of the enemy; and with him I would leave my foul for this happy end. I fee help no where else in any respect; my wisdom is foolishness; I am all over guilt; and fin, the world, the devil, death, and judgment, and hell are against me. But Jesus is Lord of all things. To him therefore I have betaken myself, and I have determined that he shall be all my salvation.

Secondly, Seeing I know Jefus to be the Lord of all things, I do confidently trust upon him, as authoritatively executing his offices towards me. If Jefus be the Lord of all things, and all power be given to him in heaven and earth, and herein he acts, though as the Son of man, yet as the Son of God alfo, whose natural right in all things may not be violated, then he must not be considered as an Ambassador, who, though he

has full instructions, yet is under the check and restraint of a fuperior power, but as having full power in himself, and all whose acts are valid, effectual and mighty, without reference to any other dominion. Confequently, because of this fupreme authority in Jesus, we must credit every word of his mouth as yea and amen, without gainfaying; coming to him, as he has directed, we must believe that he confers upon us forgiveness of fin, without doubting; and committing our fouls unto him, we must be perfuaded, with perfect satisfaction, that he will keep them. As far as we fail of this, we do not treat him as the Lord of all things, and peculiarly as constituted such for the work of redemption. And yet, how ready are we to make little account of our failures this way, as if unbelieving fears were not much to be regarded, and the dishonouring of Christ, as if his authority and power were infufficient, had but fmall guilt in it! They are horribly inexcufable, who will not hearken to the words, nor come to the atonement, nor submit to the grace of the Lord Jesus. And they are not to be excused, who hear, believe, and submit in a diffidence of his power.

Thirdly, Seeing I know Jefus to be the Lord of all things, I do quietly wait upon him for the performance of all falvation to me. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the falvation of the Lord; and waiting, I defire to remain in the ways my Lord has appointed me, that he may lighten my darkness, that he may cleanse me from the guilt of my daily transgressions, that he may renew my heart from day to day, fupporting me in trials, fanctifying to me all troubles, and conducting me fafely thro' this wilderness to the land of my rest, where I would be. Waiting is the opposite to impatience; and as the one proves a belief in Jesus as an all-sufficient, most wife, and vigilant Lord and Governor; so the other must of course call in question the reality of his mediatorial dominion, or the might of his power, or the administration of his government, or his faithfulness to the charge he has taken upon him. Quiet waiting is a great mark of a strong faith and an humbled heart. It was in this that Abraham eminently gave God glory.-Should he not tarry the Lord's leifure? and, because the fulfilment of the promise was long delayed, should he say, The

Lord hath forgotten; he will never do it?

Laftly, Seeing I know Jefus to be the Lord of all things,

and have taken him to be my Lord, as the subject of his kingdom, I desire to own him as such. And that these three ways, 1/t, By a dutiful use of myself, and of my gifts. As to myself, I am not my own; I am bought with a price, and at so dear a rate did my Lord buy me, that it cost him his blood. But not only am I his purchase, I am his by conquest also. He conquered my enemy that had me in chains, and delivered me. What, that I should be my own master? No; but his servant, which is far better. But farther still, I have solemnly yielded up myself to him; and shall I draw back? Every way I am his. To his fervice, use, and glory I am devoted. I defire that he may use me as he pleases, not consulting my will, humour, ease, interest, or any convenience of life, but disposing of me as shall be most for his glory and interest.-Then as to my gifts, they came from him. If I have knowledge, wisdom, prudence, wealth, honour, he is the Lord of all things, the property lies in him. And what will he that I do with them? That I lay them out for the good of his church, and for the enlargement of his interests, as a betrusted servant in his family? Surely he could put them into my hands with no other defign. And to this end, through thy grace, O Lord Jefus, and not to the indulgence of pride, or the gratifying of inclination, I have determined to use them in all watchfulness, prayer, and fears. But there is a peculiar talent he has trufted with me, my flation and calling in the world. There his honour is most concerned. My foul, be faithful there. Do thy duty there, as to the Lord. Secondly, I defire to own him as my Lord, by a public profession of his name in the world. I defire to walk in his steps, however mean it may make me appear. I defire to observe his words, though I alone were fo engaged in the midst of the earth, and all were hating, reproaching, and perfecuting me for doing fo. I defire never to be ashamed of owning myself his in anywise, whatever ridicule it may bring upon me; I defire to own my Lord in the most public manner, that the world may take notice I am a fervant of his. I desire to own him in all his public institutions, his day, the ministrations of his word, the memorials of his body and blood: I defire to own him in his people, by countenancing them, encouraging them, giving my hand publicly to them, because they are his; conforting with them, and doing them all the offices of brotherly love, as belonging K A

to Christ. In all things I desire to confess Jesus to be my Lord before men, as I trust he will confess me to be his fervant before the angels of God. And, Thirdly, I defire to own Jesus to be my Lord, by keeping my body and spirit for him to death and judgment. They are both his, and I defire to keep both for him, that I may render them to him at his day, that in me he may be glorified, as well as others. I defire to keep my body fit for his use, undefiled by intemperance, luft, floth, or any other carnal indulgence; and my spirit free from those unchristian tempers of pride, ambition, covetousnefs, envy, refentment, love of this world, which would make it lothsome in his fight, and prejudicial to his glory. I defire to be preparing for his eternal fervice, in a life of felfdenial and spiritual mindedness. I desire to watch and pray, that my body may be in subjection to my spirit, and my spirit to the Lord. I defire to be found thus doing, when thou, Lord, shalt come, and then to render up my foul and body chearfully to thee, to serve thee and follow thee to all the ages of a blitsful eternity.

Brethren, thus the true Christian believeth in the Lord Jefus. Is this the common character of those who are called by the name of Christians? Let us consider what we have heard, let us examine ourselves whether we be in the faith; let us prove ourselves. Happy are they who call Jesus Lord, on such a footing as this. But what will it avail to call him Lord a thousand times over, when we are strangers to this temper of faith? We must have made some remarks on ourselves, while this discourse has been delivering. Call them back and improve them. If I have not spoken the words of truth and toberness, condemn me; but if I have, O spare not yourselves, as you hope for mercy in the day of the Lord.

## SERMON XVII.

#### Acrs xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

WE have particularly considered the pretentions which Jefus has to our faith in him as our Saviour, from his being Christ, in himself the only Son of the Father, and by constitution our Lord. If he be fet apart and sitted for his work
by divine unction, if he cannot want power to perform it as
being the only-begotten Son, and if his authority be not less
than his power, as Lord of all in his mediatorial character,
then the grounds on which we believe in him cannot be insufficient, and we have no room lest us to question, whether
there be a saving efficacy in all that he has done, is doing,
and has yet to do, in the matter of God's glory, in our salvation, who believe in his name.

By what steps he has proceeded, and does proceed herein, working out falvation, we now declare, when we say, 'Who 'was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, '&c.' In which several points are comprised certain foundations of sact, upon the performance of which, we, knowing also who he is, remain satisfied in his being a Saviour sufficient

in all respects.

The first is, 'That he was conceived by the Holy Ghost;' and from his being so (in connexion with the dignity of his person as the Son of God, and his divine constitution to his offices, and to dominion therein, and with the several other points which come afterwards to be spoken to, as necessary to make his work complete) we profess our belief in him as Jefus the Saviour. And it will be exceedingly delightful to the humble soul to follow Jesus through the whole of these tran-

factions, and fee him taking away, one after another, all those obstacles which stood in the way of fallen man's happiness in

God, in the future and eternal world.

This person, who, we say, was conceived by the Holy Ghost, is no other than he who was just before spoken of, Jesus Christ the only Son our Lord. And when we alledge that he was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary, we mean to express our belief, 'That the word was made sless.' Concerning which incarnation of the word by the operation of the Holy Ghost on the Virgin Mary, enabling her to conceive, two things must be previously laid down.

First, That there was an absolute necessity that the only-begotten Son, who had undertaken the work of redemption, should be made man to effect it. He was to redeem man who was fallen from God, and lay under a curse declared by the mouth of God, 'In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt furely die,' and which justice demanded the full execution of. The nature therefore which lay under the curse for fin must suffer; and in that must the atonement be made. According to which was the original promife respecting our redemption; 'the feed of the woman was to bruife the ferpent's head.' And therefore the Apostle argues, that 'Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himfelf likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels: but he took on him the feed of · Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren.' And

Secondly, It was not less necessary that the manhood he should assume should be free from sin, I mean especially from original sin, which is the source of all actual transgression, and that for some very important reasons. Namely, First, That it might be sit to be assumed into union with the word, which it could not be, if itself had been desiled by sin. Secondly, Because being to discharge the office of a Saviour, and therefore both to perform a perfect obedience, and to make a satisfying atonement for us, it was absolutely needful that he should be altogether holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners; for otherwise his obedience could not have been

a proper and acceptable obedience, nor of confequence his death meritorious. His obedience could not have been a proper obedience, because it would have been deficient in a perfect conformity to the law, which on no confideration and in no view admits of the least deviation from it; and so his death would have been but the mere execution of the curse of the law upon him for his own personal guilt: so that in this case, instead of having provided a righteousness and atonement for others, he should have needed both from some other for himfelf. And, Thirdly, Because as from our other representative and covenant-head, there is derived to us a principle of fin, fo from Christ believers must receive a contrary and quick ning spirit and principle of universal holiness, which nevertheless could not have been the case, had he not been possesfed of it himfelf, but born in fin as we are.

These things being laid down, we shall very readily see the meaning of our professor, when he fays, 'I believe in Jesus Christ the only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the · Holy Ghost. I believe in him, says he, in all those characracters, among other reasons, for this, because he was in that manner conceived: for, as I am well fatisfied of the necessity there was that the word should have been made flesh for our falvation, and that that flesh should have been free from all fin, fo I hereby declare myfelf to be undoubtedly affured of the fact itself,' and this is my intention in faying, that I believe he was conceived by the Holy Ghost; whereby I

would have it understood.

First, That I believe the human nature or manhood of Jesus Christ was conceived by the holy Ghost. And my meaning is on the one hand, that what the Virgin was enabled to conceive in her womb was a complete, real, and proper man, confifting of a reasonable soul and human slesh, as other men do, and of his mother's substance, as other children are; in which respect there is no manner of difference between him and me, both of us deriving our substance in the womb from our respective mothers; and both confifting of a reasonable soul and human flesh, which I as plainly discern he did, as I know I do myself. But on the other hand, I am not less comfortably fatisfied, that in regard of the manner of our conception in the wombs of our feveral mothers, there is the greatest difference. For whereas I was in a natural, ordinary way begot-

ten, the manhood of Jesus was conceived without the Virgin's knowing a man, by the holy Ghost coming upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadowing her, whereby this child was fingularly conceived. And although I know not any thing of the manner of this miraculous conception, nor have any conceit arifing therefrom that what was begotten was of the fubstance of the holy Ghost, or any thing other than proper man; yet hereby I am fully affured the nature of that child was holy, and that being conceived by the holy Ghost he was conceived without that infection of original fin which accompanies the conception of every one naturally gendered of Adam; of which as I am fatisfied by the manner of his conception, fo am I further clearly affured by the express words of the angel, who, speaking of the holy Ghost's overshadowing Mary, adds as the consequence thereof, Therefore also that HOLY thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God. And that he was indeed a holy thing, without any mixture of fin, is still additionally manifest to me from his whole life afterwards, in which he always did the things which pleased God, and upon just grounds challenges all his enemies to convince him of fin; as indeed well he might, feeing he had fo great and fufficient a teftimony of his perfect uprightness, as God's public voice from heaven, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. But this is not all that I would be understood to mean by his being conceived by the holy Ghost; for,

Secondly, I do intend thereby farther (without which indeed I could not fay that the word was made flesh) the affumption of this manhood, fo conceived, into personal union with the eternal Son of the Father. This affumption or taking of the manhood into God, as it is the corner stone of all his mediatorial transactions, (fince whatever he has done, does, or shall do, in quality of mediator, he does, not as God simply, but as God manifest in the slesh) I find clearly set down in scripture, where I am told, that the word was made flesh; that God was manifest in the flesh; that Christ Jesus, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal wit. God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a fervant, and was made in the likeness of man. Indeed nothing is more evident to me through the whole Scriptures, especially of the New Testament, than that that very person who was the Son of God from all eternity, was made man in time. From the most undoubted testimonies,

by the plainest declarations, and convincing actions I am perfeetly satisfied of his being at once the Son of God and the Son of man; I fay at once, because while I fee distinctly the divine and human natures fubfilting in him, I fee as distinctly that they subsist together in his own person. For by personal union I mean the subsisting together of two things different in nature in the one person. So I know that the soul and body of man are of different natures, yet united they make one only person, a man. In like manner I am as well convinced that two natures subsist together in Christ, so as that, while they are two different natures, they do nevertheless make but one person. I fay, they do subsist together in his one person; and that without confusion: for although by their union they constitute that person, yet in that person they so subsist together, as that there is no manner of mixture or changing the one nature with or into the other, but neither nature being changed into or confounded with the other, they do both retain the acts and operations which are proper to each nature. Nevertheless as both these natures do subsist in the same one person, the act of that person is that of both the natures together. Hence I hear Jesus saying while he was on earth, that the Son of Man is in heaven, ascribing, in consequence of this personal union, that which was proper to the divine nature unto the human, which latter was not then, but the divine nature only in heaven. And so on the other part I find that which is proper to the human nature ascribed to the divine; as when it is said, God purchased the church with his own blood, we have the action of the manhood attributed to the Godhead, and therein not only the clearest proof of the union of the two natures in Christ, but also the comfort to find, that whatever the man Jesus said or did, was also done and said by the Son of God.-Knowing him therefore to be God and man in one person, I do,

Thirdly, Most satisfiedly and assuredly acquiesce in him as being exactly that Mediator which the glory of God on one side, and the wants of us sallen creatures demand on the other. Being God and man at once, he could in our nature perform an obedience and pay a price, which, because of his being the Son of God, could not but be infinitely honourable to the law of the divine Majesty, and infinitely satisfying of the demands of justice, therefore unquestionably available to the pardon and acceptance of all that believe in his name, finful and ungodly

hough

though they be. And being God as well as man, the other public actions proper to his manhood, (as well as his death) his refurrection, afcension, and life, must needs be powerfully efficacious to our being rifen, exalted, and living for evermore in him as our representative. Had he been only God, he could not have reached our necessitous case; had he been only man. he could not have given the needful glory to the holinefs and justice of God which our rebellion had robbed him of. But now that I know him to be God and man in one person. I see him capable of giving all that glory to God, and all that falvation to man, which his rights or their needs require. And therefore I fee in him all the direful confequences of Adam's fire taken away. By the offence of Adam am I made a finner? By the obedience of the other I am made righteous. Through the fin of Adam am I under a curse? By the death of Jesus I am redeemed from it. By the fall of Adam was I born in fin? Jefus has power to raife me to spiritual life. In Adam am I configned to death? in Jefus I am rifen again.' As I am in Adam, is there no hope for me beyond the grave? Christ hath brought life and immortality to light. In this God-man I fee myfelf complete. The words he has spoken to me from lips like my own, can want no authority, for he that speaketh them is God. He that intercedeth for me is he that also died in my behalf, bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, touched with the feeling of my infirmities; and I am affured I can be denied nothing he asks for me, for he that died and pleadeth for me is God. Can fin, the world, or the devil be too ftrong for me, when the Son of God has in my nature vanquished them all, and is still God in the slesh, for my protection and fafety? This is the very person I wanted, and having such an one, I can now want nothing. Gladly do I join my weak voice with that of the ministring angels, and, whilst I behold the incarnate God, fing with them, 6 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men.'

And now you may fee how much is contained in this one fentence of the Creed, 'conceived by the Holy Ghost.' Have you understood these things? It will behave you to do so, and to lay them up in your hearts, for they are very comfortable. But do you also believe them? Do you believe that the manhood of Jesus Christ was framed of the substance of the virgin Mary by the operation of the holy Ghost, and thereby con-

ceived without the fpot of original fin, and fitted for union with the Godhead, and for the work which the Son, as redeemer, had to do in it and by it; and also, that being thus prepared, it was actually taken into union with the eternal word, in order to our falvation? If you do really believe this, First, You are very fensible of your own misery in yourself.—Secondly, You are very thankful for this wonderful work of God. Thirdly, You rest all your hope concerning pardon, grace, and glory, upon an union with this God-man Jesus.

First, A real belief of this incarnation of the Son implies a true sense of your misery in yourself. For the conception of the Redeemer, so directly and necessarily out of the common course of nature, plainly shews to what a fad condition the nature of man is funk fince and by the fall of Adam, while also the consequence of such apostasy is alike evident, in the necessity there was of the incarnation of the Son to satisfy justice, and every way to repair the damage done by the fall.-Wherefore to own Christ's incarnation, as a means needful to fave us, is to acknowledge our mifery in ourfelves, and particularly that of which all other mifery is but the confequence, the fin of our nature. And you will understand, that to believe and own your fallen nature, is indeed through fuch a divine conviction of the truth of it, as no man has nor can have by his own reason, but is really of the holy Ghost. So that to be truly fensible of our fallen nature, without which there can be no practical believing in Christ as God incarnate, is the very gift of God; and the experience of it, especially in the deep iniquities thereof, instead of discouraging us, should give us great encouragement, that we are at least in the way to Christ,—But alas! how little sense is there of our miserable fallen state, to be met with, among those who name Christ's name? Ask any one almost you meet, whether they be corrupted creatures? Many will deny it; many know not what you mean. Others will fay, why yes, who does not know that? to be fure we are all born in fin. But do you go farther with them, and fay, now therefore, if you be born in fin, if your nature is fin, you must needs have fin in you, and truly it is visible to this day your heart abounds with pride, and felf-will, and covetousness and unbelief, and hypocrify, and envy, and malice. What I? (the party will be ready to an-· (wer) Pray what do you take me for? I proud and covetous?

I am as far from it as any person in the world. Nobody ever took me for such before. And to be plain, you are very uncharitable to judge of me so hardly, and very impertinent to say what you do.' The truth is, very sew people
take any kind of notice of what is within them, and if their
outsides be tolerably clean, are ready to think all is well.—
And yet we all alike profess to believe in Christ's conception
by the Holy Ghost, that he might be free from that original

corruption all others are defiled with.

Secondly, If you really believe the incarnation of the Son, you are very thankful for such a wonderful work of God .-Truly it is of all others the most wonderful of God's works; and St Paul might well call it a great mystery, because of the unsearchable wisdom, power, condescension, and love that is therein. It is indeed so mysteriously wonderful, that the angels can find nothing in heaven like it, and therefore, as it were, forget the proper glories of their own station, to look into, admire, and adore this unparalleled instance of God's workmanship. They sing, in the views of it, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men. And if you really believe it, you will join their praises and adorations. And what fay you? Is it thus with you? Is your heart affected as it ought, while you look upon the incarnate God? Does it aftonish you to see this condescension; the Son leaving his Father's bosom, and affuming our nature? Do you love to look upon this glorious fight? Does it dwell upon your foul with power, and bear away every earthly thing before it; filling you with real gratitude, that you could cheerfully do any thing, and fuffer any thing, and lofe every thing for Jesus? And are you waiting, expecting, longing for the transporting day when you shall see and be for ever with Jesus? This is our duty; and if we be not thus disposed toward Jesus, where is our faith? Do we really believe that the great God is come down from heaven to be our Saviour? It cannot be. And yet in what breast almost are these honourable, these grateful thoughts of Jesus to be found? Say, my brethren, Dost thou thus think of Jesus, thus love to think of him, thus burn for him and his interest? Ah traitor, mayest thou not rather say of thyfelf, 'The love of Jesus, of Jesus the incarnate God, e never warmed my heart; never look upon him, never, never, no not one moment of my life do I look upon him with

colore and delight. Every day I flight him, I despise him. I dishonour him, I live to his disgrace, to the hindrance, to the injury of his kingdom, and the hurt of his people. I, even I, live daily confirming, strengthening, upholding, and with all my power maintaining and enlarging the kingdom of

'the devil. O where, where is my faith!'

Thirdly, If you really believe the incarnation of the Son, you are actually resting all your hope concerning pardon, grace, and glory, in your being united unto this God man Jefus. And this indeed is the best proof of your faith in the matter before us. As far as you fee your mifery and helplessness in yourself, you can have no confidence in yourself for acceptance with God, ability to ferve him, and interest in his everlafting favour; and therefore, as far as in the fense of this your mifery in yourself, you are made really to believe in Jesus Christ as the Word made slesh, to help you in all these respects, you will unquestionably rest all your hope in him. And here I must observe, that it will be impossible for you to put your trust in him with confidence and satisfaction to your foul, unless, and any farther than you are persuaded that he is God man, not only man but God, and both God and man in one person. You will not, indeed you cannot, believe there is a fusficiency in his righteousness and atonement for your pardon and acceptance, or that he is able to raife you from and above fin now, or to life everlatting from the grave hereafter, unless you believe him to be God. Wherefore your real trust in Christ for pardon, grace and glory from the Father, in, by, and through him, can be the only fatisfying proof to your own foul, that you believe him to be God manifest in the slesh for our salvation. And do you thus rest your all on him? And are you thus persuaded he is sufficient for you? Search and try your hearts, for nothing but they can testify whether you have or no this faith in you.

Here, brethren, lies all your real hope; and if you turn to any other; if you are thinking to stand before God in your own righteousness, or to get heaven by your own doings, I must plainly tell you, that you overturn christianity from the very foundation, and your own soul along with it. Look, therefore, well to yourselves, for there is no other name under heaven given unto men, whereby we must be saved, but only

the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

# SERMON XVIII.

### AcTs xvi. 30. 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

IN speaking of our Lord's conception by the Holy Ghost, the important point of his incarnation was opened, in regard both of its necessity and reality. Yet something still remains to be added, for the farther confirmation of our faith in Jesus, as the Word made sless, and which is contained in the words that follow, born of the Virgin Mary. Concerning which the believer proceeds making his profession, and declar-

ing farther the grounds of his faith, by faying,

Firft, I believe that the woman, who was thus miraculoufly enabled to conceive, was a Virgin at the time of her conception, and that at least she continued so, till she brought forth her first-born Son. For I find that she, unto whom the angel Gabriel was fent from God, was a Virgin, that she continued so after her conception, for before they (Joseph and she) came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost; and that she was really no other at the time of bringing forth, because I am not only told a virgin shall be with child, but also bring forth a fon, which prophecy is applied to this very case, unto which only, according to the intention of the Holy Ghoft, it did or could fully and exactly belong, by St. Matthew. And as I fee the necessity of her being a virgin, because of Jesus's being conceived without the spot of original pollution, fo in her being fuch, I fee the completion of those prophecies concerning the Messiah, in which this very thing had been foretold of him: The Lord hath created a new thing

thing on the earth, a woman shall compass a man. And behold, a wirgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. And farther,

Secondly, As I believe her to have been a virgin, fo also that her name was Mary. Whereby I do not mean to ascribe any peculiar eminency to the name, but to signify that I mean thereby, that Mary who was espoused to Joseph, of the tribe of Judah, to which the promise of the Messiah was made, and of the lineage of David, to whose family that promise was yet more especially confined. And farthermore,

Thirdly, I do stedfastly believe that the child, which thro' the operation of the Holy Ghost she did conceive in her womb of her own substance, was there nourished by the same substance of the Virgin as other children are, till her full time was come, and then born into the world in like manner as oother infants.

And by all this my meaning is, that I believe that manhood which, immediately on its conception in the womb, the eternal Son of God affumed into himself in personal union, was proper man, and that it was no other than that very person, perfect God and perfect man, who thus lay hid in the womb of the Virgin, and at length was born into the world. So that on the whole, I declare what I am fully convinced of, as a point of the utmost moment to my confidence in Jesus as my Saviour, that the only Son, by taking that manhood into himself which the Virgin Mary, of the tribe of Judah, and of the lineage of David, had by the operation of the Holy Ghoft conceived in her womb, afterwards nourished there, and at length brought forth, was made flesh; from that moment fublishing God and man together in one person, not only while he was on earth, but now also that he is in heaven; and that it is that very person, God man, who now reigneth as head over all things to his church, who shall come in power and great glory to judge the quick and the dead, and who shall be the final, full, and bleffed portion and fecurity of his purchased possession in everlasting glory.

You may see now from the whole, that these and the former words put together, amount in substance to this one point, the incarnation of the only-begotten of the Father. Upon which endearing subject I am glad to have a little space here

for some necessary improvements. And,

First, Was the Word made slesh for our falvation? Then what was our condition that could need fuch a Saviour!-Confider what his business was in the world. Was it not this, to bear our iniquities, to be made a curse for us, to give his foul an offering for fin, to be bruised, and put to grief, to be crucified and flain? Who, what the Lord of glory, the Prince of life, the only-begotten of the Father, the Heir of all things, the Maker of the heavens? Was it no other than he, that for us men, and for our falvation came down from heaven? And was incarnate by the Holy Ghoft, of the Virgin Mary, and was made man? Judge then how deep our ruin, and how infufficient all human help! Kings stoop not in person to petty concerns. Had we needed only to be taught the will of God, a mere inspired Prophet had done as well. But sin was entered into the world, the wrath of God was gone forth, death was waiting for the divine command to feize the criminals; and hell, with remorfelefs mouth, yawned behind to devour. The case was urgent. Mercy must exert itself to the highest stretch, or the human race is undone for ever. Sin was committed, the irreversible curse against it had been before denounced. What could be done? Justice must be fatisfied. The Majesty of heaven must lose nothing of his glory. Unless satisfaction was made, there was no place for repentance; there could have been no repentance; to men any more than devils God would not have given grace to repent; and could there have been any, it had ferved no faving purpose. But who could heal so wide a breach? Who was sufficient for so vast an undertaking? The law must have more than a perfect obedience paid it, it must be an obedience which would restore it to all that honour and dignity which the most perfect and finless submission of Adam and all his race to all its demands would have given it upon earth. The curse declared and gone forth must be satisfied to the uttermost; and by an equivalent which would fully answer to all of us enduring eternal punishments. Death was to be overcome, yea to be made a passage to life. The grave must be made to render back its dead, to render them back with happy advantage, incorruptible, glorious, powerful, spiritual. New heavens and earth must be prepared, and sinners of this world prepared also to inhabit them. All things must be replaced on the original footing, when God made man in paradife;

and an eternal peace and fellowship restored between him and us. See, firs, what a work! And who but the incarnate God is fufficient for it? Behold he comes, he comes down from heaven, he leaves his Father's bosom, he takes up his residence in the Virgin's womb, he is born, he is found in fashion as a man; he comes to live, to die, by death to conquer Satan, death, and hell; to rife again to reign; to fet open the gate of life. Look upon this fight, my friends. -Come near and behold it. Now that God is vailed in flesh, you may look upon him without danger; the fight will confume nothing but your pride, That indeed it will lay very Would God it might! Surely it ought. What have we to be proud of? Shall we be proud of our being finners, guilty finners, condemned finners, helpless finners, finners of fuch magnitude, that the very Son of God must needs be made man to fave us from the pit of hell, the place and portion of devils? Here is the glass in which we may see our true features. And into this glass we have never looked to any good purpose, unless we this day know, that in ourselves we are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: and our fouls be attending upon the Word made flesh, in the cry of the multitude, Hosannah to the Son of David; bleffed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosannah in the highest.

Secondly, Let us confider the amazing condescension displayed in the Incarnation of the eternal Son of the Father. High as the heavens above the earth are the thoughts of God above ours. He would make known his justice, wisdom, and love among the fallen inhabitants of the earth. And what a way past finding out doth he choose for the purpose! The express image of the Father's person shall assume the character and office of Redeemer; and therein fet out to view his proper glory as the only-begotten. This was 'a glory which he had with the Father before the world was:' but now he will illustrate it upon earth, and let men see, that in him dwell all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, of grace and love. Accordingly, in the full forefight of all that he must submit to in this mediatorial capacity, he fays, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me; in burnt-offerings and facrifices for fin thou hast had no pleasure: then faid I, Lo! I come to do thy will, O God.' He undertook it with infinite satisfaction. 'I delight to do it, yea thy law

is within my heart,' in the midst of my bowels. Yet to what did he condescend in doing this will of God? The Apostle will tell us in a few words: 'Being in the form of God, he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a fervant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.' It must never be forgotten, that the actions of Jesus are the actions of his whole person, in which the two natures subsisting together, what is properly the act of one cannot be done without the other: in which view it is that St Paul here speaks of His 'taking upon him the form of a fervant, humbling himself, and becoming obedient unto the death of the cross, who was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God.' See here the riches of Christ! What treasures of wisdom and grace are not shewn forth in him and by him in this condescension! . How honourable our incarnate God herein! Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, says the chosen Vessel, that though he was rich, yet for your Jakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. Honourable to his name this voluntary poverty of his, that he might enrich us poor. This indeed was Let all the angels of God worship this condescending Creator. Let the redeemed that come to Zion with everlafting joy, receive him with the loudest hosannahs. name of Jesus let every knee bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; yea, let every tongue confeis, that Jesus Christ is Lord. Let the happy faints above. that behold his glory, cry out eternally, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was flain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and bleffing. Bleffing and honour, and glory and power, be unto him that fitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. · upon earth, O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain: O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be onot afraid. Say unto the cities of Judah, behold your God! behold, the Lord God will come with a strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: Behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with voung.'

'young.' Thus we should think of, receive, and honour our

incarnate God. But,

Thirdly, Since our profession engages us to a conformity with Jefus, his incarnation will furnish us with some of the most exalted lessons of Christianity, and at the same time prefent before us the most engaging motive to practife them .-We will consider as much of the mind of Christ as is peculiarly exemplified in this vast ministry of the incarnation, which perhaps may be comprifed under these three instructive particulars. The wonderful readiness of his mind to his whole mediatorial work, in obedience to his Father's will.-The use he was inclined to make of his glorious sufficiencies. And his estimation of all worldly things. Each of which we

will endeavour to apply as the time will permit.

First, The wonderful readiness of his mind to his whole mediatorial work, in obedience to his Father's will. He could fay in truth, I delight to do thy will, O God, year thy law is within my bowels. Obedience was graven on his heart, and nothing could shake it. He came into the world to do God's will; that was his grand motive. Though he knew the whole of his work, and faw perfectly what the doing it would cost him, what he must endure from men, and what a sacrifice he must make to divine justice, yet with the fullest confent, with the freest choice, not of constraint, (for he was under none) but willingly, he undertook the whole in obedience to his Father's will; Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he fuffer-He learned it. What? was it a lesson he had to learn? No, for the law of God was in his bowels. But now in his fufferings he practifed or experienced it, or perhaps he fet his hand to it, entered upon his work of fuffering in the most shameful and painful part of it, and by and by being made perfect, having completed and finished it, he became the Author of eternal falvation unto all them that obey him. dience was his business, his employment in the world. is the mind of Christ. And is it ours, my friends? Is God's law within our hearts also? Has the obedience of Jesus Christ displayed to us the sovereignty of the blessed God, recommended to us his fervice, and put a glory on the law, and fet it before us in its proper and defirable excellency, in fuch manner, that now we delight therein? it is dearer to us than thou-L 4

fands of gold and filver? is it our meat and drink to do the will of God? Else we have not put on Christ, and are fundamentally strangers to the mind that was in him. What? Did he come to do God's will that he might give us encouragement to neglect it? Or does he not expressly say, 'That not every one who calleth him Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he only that doth the will of his Father which 'is in heaven;' Nothing is plainer than that God made us at first to serve him; and it is not less plain, that all true believers in Jesus Christ are of their master's mind, and, after his example, zealous of good works: for fuch are 'God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that they should walk in them.' Now therefore, brethren, are you all thus minded? Is it the great concern of you all to ferve and please God? Let your consciences fay, if this be nearest your hearts. If it be, if you have an unfeigned love of God's law, if in the inner man, in the very bottom of your heart, you like, approve, and heartily defire to be conformed to it in every tittle without exception, and can never be fatisfied till your whole man, foul, spirit and and body, be brought at length into a perfect conformity with it; and if this inward choice be proved to be genuine and real, by your constant endeavour in all things to please God, and in nothing to please your own natural inclinations, then assuredly you have the Spirit of Christ, and are one of his. But if your ruling defire be to pleafe yourfelf and the world; if your heart be unacquainted with the excellency of God's law, and you find no love of it there; if you know not the restraining fear of God's power and presence in your soul, but are walking in a spirit of licentiousness and security; if your soul be without experience of divine love, and neither the loveliness, nor loving kindness of God have an influence upon it, to engage you to any grateful purpose of walking with and serving him; if you see not that to do the will of God is your one only business or, though you seem to see it is, if you either seek not from his word what his will is, or make no ferious inquiries whether you are performing it or no; if you live after the course of the world, and interest, pleasure, honour, direct your conduct in fuch a case, what would you have me say? Would you that I fay, you have the mind of Christ? You would judge me a base flatterer if I did, a lying prophet, a vile

vile diffembler, a horrid betrayer of my office and your fouls; your own hearts would give me the lie, as they are even now doing to any confidence you may rashly have taken up of your

being in Christ.

Secondly, As the incarnation of Christ teaches us obedience, fo also an humble use of whatever we are and have, to God's glory, and the good of others. Pride is all felfish, and wraps us up in ourselves, without regard to God or man. Under this influence we only confider what we are, to be vain upon it; and our gifts and endowments are only enjoyed to bring us in an income of homage and praise, if not from God, yet at least from man. We make no use of them to the ends they were defigned for; and any farther than the purposes of our own reputation, interest, or ease may call them into action, they are made even no use of at all. But Christ teaches us a better lesson. 'Let nothing,' fays St. Paul, 'be done thro' ftrife or vain glory. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.' To be vain-glorious of what you have, and to have no confideration of others in the use of it, he subjoins, is not the mind of Christ. He was in the form of God, and yet condescended to become a fervant amongst men, and even to die for us. Did he consider his own things? Yea, did he not forget his own glory, and stoop to the meanest estate and the deepest sufferings? And why! Was it because he considered the things of others? If he had not, would he have condescended as he did? Would he have taken up our nature, lived in a low condition, fubmitted to every kind and degree of reproach and fuffering, to the shame, the pain, the death of a cross? All these submisfions our desperate case required of him who alone was able to help us; and therefore he thus submitted for our good, to the glory of God. O, unparalleled love! who can come near it, who feel the bleffed faving effects of it, without being kindled into the like flame? Brethren, what worth is there in our gifts, our talents, our time, our life, but to bestow them in this Christ-like manner? Shall Christ, forgetting himself, live for us, and we, who call ourselves his disciples, live for ourselves, and do nothing for the glory of God, and the salvation of fouls? Is this the Spirit of Christ, or is it a lifeless formality? Away with all pretences to Christianity, if ye are strangers to the power and spirit of it. And if there be any thing

thing peculiar, eminent, and glorious, in the religion of Jefus, it is, that by the power of a divine faith, the foul is taken up above the narrow confiderations of felf, and engages in the noble views of ferving men in their most important interests, as well as present happiness, to the honour of God. This glorious design evidently brought down Christ from heaven; and incontestably there is nothing but entering thereinto in subordination to him, that can bring us up hither. As a point therefore of the last importance to the reputation of our religion, and the salvation of our own souls, we should enter every one of us into a serious inquiry, whether this spiritbe in us; whether we be acting on this plan; and whether these be the grand views we have in life, and by which all our advantages, abilities, and opportunities are in our general course directed. Otherwise we know not the Lord, nor will he own us for his, on the day that he maketh up his jewels. Yet,

Thirdly, What diffrace has Jefus put upon all the pomp and pride of life! And how taken away all reproach from poverty! Who knows not that the incarnate God was born of a poor woman, was brought forth in a stable, was laid in a manger, the inn being taken up by more noble guests? Who knows not, that he lived in a state of dependence, having throughout his life no house of his own to lay his head in, and being maintained by the liberality of others? This every one knows; but alas! who confiders? The pomp of life, to be of importance in the world, to bear a fway for wealth and abundance, to live at ease, to be above the dreadful apprehenfion of poverty, is not this the too common character of those who profess themselves the followers of that Jesus who took upon him the form of a fervant? Who almost has learnt from the low estate of the son of man, having food and raiment, therewith to be content? Who is not ashamed of poverty, and how often is it despised, though the King of glory was among the poorest of men? But such is the way of the children of this world. Their gods blind them. As they fee nothing better than what lies before them, so they cannot be expected to do other than lay up their hearts in it, and to measure all their good and evil by prefent prosperity and adversity. But has the believer learnt all this lesson from his Master? Hast thou not still some lurking esteem of worldly honour, some seeret puffing up of heart through present distinctions of place, forfortune, or family? Is there not still a hankering after some figure in the world, and an uneasy apprehension of being overlooked and made no account of? Is not thy heart craving eafy circumstances, diffatisfied in the want, and but too well pleased in the enjoyment of them? It is not necessity, but pride and love of ease, which create those painful anxieties, our hearts are too much acquainted with. Else how is it, that while few if any of us want food and raiment more or less, we all want content? Let us confider the manger and the stable; and let that fight repress every ambitious thought, and every complaining fear. And let us be affured, that when we have most of the mind of Christ in us, and are farthest translated into his spiritual kingdom, when we are most indifferent about the good, and most reconciled to the evil things of this prefent world; when neither prosperity pusses us up, nor adversity depresses us; Ah, sirs, how happy would it be for us, even here, if we had so learned Christ!

# SERMON XIX.

#### ACTS XVI. 30, 31.

What must I do to be suved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

Having spoken of the Incarnation of the Son of God, from these words of the Creed, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, we proceed now to another foundation of sact, on which we build our stedfast belief in Jesus as a sufficient Saviour; namely, Suffered under Pontius Pilate.

There will need no more to be faid concerning the words under Pontius Pilate, but to observe, that they are added, either to determine the time of our Saviour's sufferings, because it was the manner of the Jews at that time to record the history of remarkable sacts, by referring to the name of the perfon under whose government they happened; or to account for the particular manner and nature of his suffering, and thereby to ascertain the suffilment of certain prophecies relative thereto, and which would not have been suffilled, had Jesus suffered after the Jewish manner of punishment.

The main point is, his suffering. And here our believer

goes forward with his profession, and declares,

First, I believe that the person, of whose suffering I now speak, is that very God-man, and no other, Jesus; of whose being Christ, the only Son of the Father, our Lord, and incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, I have already pronounced my most unshaken persuasion. I believe it was this very person, and no other, that suffered; that it was he, who being the only-begotten of the Father, and Lord of all

things, was made man, that suffered. Not in his divine nature did he suffer; he could not: but in his human; yet inasmuch as I know that his human nature has no subsistence but in and with the divine in one person, while I deny that the Godhead did or could suffer, I affirm that he who is God as well as man suffered; and therefore by virtue of this personal union applying the actions of the one nature to the other, I stick not to say with St. Paul, 'The princes of this

world crucified the Lord of glory.' And,

Secondly, As I am satisfied that he, Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of man, suffered, so I am fully assured that what he suffered was the whole curse of the law. He suffered for us; and if so, he must needs suffer what lay against us, which was no less than the curse of the law. I believe that it was his office to redeem us from the curse of the law; and I know that he could not do this, unless he were made a curse for us, because through original and actual transgression we all lay under sentence of death. All that curse which was due to our fins by the justice of God, and was pronounced against them by his righteous fentence, I know that he fuffered; and that to the whole extent unto which the fentence reached.— Therefore, fince the fentence reached to the whole man, foul and body, I believe that he fuffered in both. In his body, as throughout his whole life, fo more especially in the conclufion of it, when I fee him in the hands of wicked and bloodthirsty men, and treated by them with an uncommon degree of feverity, cruelty, and inhumanity, till they had effected their malicious and furious purpofes, by nailing him to the accurfed tree, where he continued till these purposes were completed, and issued in the pangs of death. In his foul, by inexpressible grief, exceeding forrow, and fore amazement, when the Lord was laying upon him the iniquity of us all; and he was bearing our griefs and carrying our forrows; by a diffress of spirit, which, however innocent, was too big to be contained, bursting forth in the most earnest prayers for the removal of this bitter cup, if confistent with the Father's will and the ends of his fufferings, it were possible, and at the fame time in a fweat, which was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. In a word, I know that he fuffered in his whole man, and all the curse of the law. And,

Thirdly, As I am fatisfied there was necessity this Son of

God in our nature should thus give his soul a facrifice for sin, as well as for perfecting the work of reconciliation, as for fulfilling the scriptures of God concerning him; so am I assured that this his suffering was altogether effectual to all the ends designed by it, and particularly to make atonement for sin. Of which esticacy of his sufferings to take away sin I have no manner of question, as I am assured there was that in him which could not but make them every way meritorious. For I am constrained to believe there must be an infi-

nite merit in these propitiatory sufferings.

First, Because of the dignity of the person whose sufferings they were. The dignity of his glorious person I cannot comprehend, when I consider him in his divine nature, 'the Son of God, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom he made the heavens, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person: neither can I reach into the comprehension of that dignity his human nature (despised as he was, and is, and rejected of men) was exalted unto by being affumed into union with him, who is 'over all, God bleffed for ever. But this I can eafily conceive, that if fo august a person gave himself for us, the curse of the law must by his fufferings have been fully executed, and the demands of justice paid to the uttermost farthing. I can well conceive the merit of this blood-shedding, while I certainly know that the blood shed is that of the Son of God .- Nor is this all, for as I acknowledge the merit of Christ's sufferings, because efpecially of the dignity of his person; so,

Secondly, Because of his perfect obedience to the law of God. Without this, he might indeed have suffered, but he could have made no satisfaction for sin. But when I know him to be 'a Lamb without blemish;' when I remember that he 'always did the things that pleased God;' when I hear God's repeated testimony of him from heaven, 'This is my 'beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,' which he could not have been, had not that Son been an obedient child; —When I know that 'he magnissed the law' by submitting to it, and 'made it honourable,' by setting it forth before the world in its sull beauty, majesty, and loveliness, through his obedience; so that the glory thereof, which otherwise had not, and could not have been so seen, was brought openly before the face of the world, and displayed in its most engaging

light; when I am affured that, as the representative of sinners, and as appointed by God thereunto, he fulfilled all the righteousness of the law, without coming short in the least degree of the high demands it makes upon our nature, dispositions, desires, thoughts, words, and works, infomuch that the prince of this world had nothing in any fort in him: when I say, in connection with the dignity of his person, I consider the persectness of his obedience, I am fully persuaded that the sufferings of such an one could not but be, what they are said

to be, ' of a sweet smelling savour to God.' And,

Thirdly, To complete the meritoriousness of his sufferings, I fee, that he was not only obedient in life, but likewise was fo unto death; his fuffering was the greatest and most noble part of his obedience. This completed his righteousness, for he was made perfect through sufferings; this crowned the whole. and finished his work of making atonement and propitiation for fin. Had he not been a perfectly righteous man, he could have made no fatisfaction for others, whatever he had fuffered; and whatever were his righteousness, if he had not made the atonement, the curse had still stood out against us. But I see him not only obedient, but obedient unto death, in the merit of his purity and holiness going forward to make a facrifice for fin, which not only the dignity of his person, but also the holiness of his human nature rendered him alone capable of making, and which he could make to the full fatisfaction of infinite justice. And while I behold so great and so good a person suffering for us; while I see divinity stooping so low. and humanity lifted so high, above every thing that is in man, as through an amazing act of fubmission to the divine will, through the exertion of a most disinterested regard to the divine glory, and to the happiness of miserable creatures, freely to confent unto and to endure every kind and degree of fuffering, which either the malice of men or devils could invent, or the vindictive wrath of God had demanded and denounced: I find all the powerful reasonings of unbelief silenced, and bowing down before so great and astonishing an atonement, I am enforced to believe that justice is fatisfied, and that even fuch a finner as I have not that guilt lying upon me, which this fuffering has not taken away by an ample satisfaction.— For these reasons, and upon these foundations, I cordially and comfortably confent unto the merit and efficacy of the sufferings of my Lord; and do boldly declare my stedfast assurance, that ' the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin,' and therefore that ' whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.'—But,

Fourthly, Besides the sirm persuasion of the sufficiency of Christ's sufferings unto reconciliation, there are certain other consequences arising therefrom, which do so strongly present themselves to my mind, that I cannot avoid feeling the force

of them. As,

First, Herein I am forced to see myself in a character no way agreeable to my pride; and therefore the more mortifying, because I cannot doubt the truth of what I am, while I see the divine and holy Jesus suffering for me. Beholding these sufferings, I am constrained to own that I am a sinner, and a rebel; that far from having any claim upon God's favour for the fake of any thing I do, I am guilty altogether, a criminal condemned and sentenced to die; that justice has demands upon me which I could not answer, though I should lie for ever in the bottomless pit; that in God's account of me I am what, till the fufferings of Christ taught me, I was not wont to think myself, vile even to God's abhorring me, and miserable without power of helping myself. For what have I seen in the sufferings of my Lord? What but all this? He was holy, harmlefs, separate from sinners, yea the well beloved, and the only begotten of the Father. Wherefore then do I fee justice exerting itself in putting thee to grief! Why is thy foul thus forrowful? And why are they buffeting and fcourging and crucifying thee? Thou hadst done no sin, all was for me. And what then am I? What a provoking sinner, that nothing but thy sufferings could appeale the wrath of God gone out against me? The heir of hell; what an heir, that thy blood only could make fatisfaction for me! O may I ever behold thy fufferings, to the confusion of every high thought in me! may they serve as a glass to represent to me with increasing clearness my real vileness and desert! may every thought I have of thy agony and bloody sweat, thy cross and passion, and precious death, convince me more and more that I am nothing, that being lowly in mine own eyes I may render all the glory of my falvation unto thee, and that when I stand a pillar in the eternal house of thy Father and my Father through thy dying love, and behold thy glory, with the company of thy redeemed I may fing

fing from the most humbled heart, Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

Secondly. As the fufferings of Christ have taught me the truth of my own character, so have they helped me to a plainer discovery of the true character of sin. The infinite God I know can alone be acquainted with the whole finfulness of fin; and is only by what he has manifested concerning it that I could have conceived any thing of its finfulness; for I plainly fee, that, till I began to know God as he has made himself known, I saw nothing of the real sinfulness of sin. But when I began to take notice that fin was the occasion of death, which was the revelation of God's righteous justice against fin, I began also to be fensible there must be somewhat extremely base in fin which could provoke infinite goodness thus to rife up against his creatures. I considered the desolations that have been in the world, and faw fin more deformed. I beheld the daily bounties of God, and was struck with its ingratitude.— I meditated on the endless damnation of sinners, and said in my heart, If God be not cruel, what must sin be? But when I turned my eyes on the fufferings of Jesus, then I saw plainly what a monster fin is. There the majesty of God presented itself to my view as infinitely affronted by it, there justice appeared to me taking infinite vengeance upon it, and there holiness expressing an infinite detestation and abhorrence of it. There I saw the character of God and the character of sin together; where he shewed me what himself was, there he taught me what fin was also. In the sufferings of Immanuel he shewed me both. Without these I had never known what I do of his holiness and majesty, his justice and mercy; and without this knowledge I had never discovered the true finfulness of sin, which I now plainly see to be evil in the very degree I know God to be excellent. O mercy in God, to teach me the finfulness of fin, by that very means whereby he is reconciled to me a finner! had he taught it me any other way, the fight of it had been despair and hell in my foul.-But when he shews me sin's vileness by the sufferings of him who died to fave me from the dreadful wages of it, he has taken an aftonishing method of emboldening me to look on the holy, just, and avenging Majesty of heaven without fear, though I am a finner, and yet to fee fin in fuch colours of de-No. 3.

formity as makes me lothe and detest it, and turn from it as from the face of a serpent. O may I see in this glorious glass more and more of its vileness! may I hate it with increasing abhorrence! may I war against and crucify it with all my strength! knowing it was sin which crucified my Lord, without whose sufferings it had sunk me into the farthermost hell.

Thirdly, While by the fufferings of Jesus I am made to see the exceeding finfulness of fin, I am at the same time made fensible of the riches of God's love, in the method he has taken for pardoning it. If I could never have known the real finfulness of sin, had I not seen Christ dying for sinners, much less could I have known the love of God but by this very means. The goodness of God to his creatures his daily acts might have shewn me, but that he had any love for finners, I could never have imagined, if he had not told me it. Could I have conceived that a holy Governor of the world, cast off by his creatures gone into rebellion against him, should have any love towards them? But what eye had not feen, nor ear heard, neither had it entered into the heart of man to conceive, that God hath revealed, even that there is mercy with him. Nay, not only mercy, but mercy in fuch a way as magnifies the gift it brings beyond all comprehension and our utmost astonishment. I fee the Lord of glory leaving the Father's bosom, and, fince finners must be faved, making satisfaction to infinite justice. I fee this. I fee him fuffering. I know it is the very Son of God. Sometimes while I contemplate myself, I have thought it impossible God should ever look upon me such a sinner.— And when again I have confidered these sufferings, declared to be endured for fuch as I am, I have been ready to doubt on the other part, through the very vastness of this mercy; can it be fo? Is it possible God should stoop thus to sinners? That love which one while feemed incapable of reaching a case so wretched as mine, another while appeared too great to be believed. I fought the scriptures. I read the history of Jesus. Here I was brought evidently to fee that he was God manifest in the slesh, while as evidently I saw that he was a man of forrows and acquainted with grief. The refult was, I was amazed and fatisfied. I could not deny the unspeakable gift. I faw and wondered. I faid, What is God? How unfearchable are his ways! Who can find him out? How high his thoughts! I faid also, What is man, that thou hast such respect. fpect unto him? What am I? God fo loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son; gave him to fuffer, to die.—Here, here, I faid, is love. What love! O teach me to know this love which passeth all human knowledge! O it is a knowledge I long for! it is my life to know thee, the true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. Eternity will not suffice to fill up the longings of my soul after this know-

ledge of thy love. But,

Lastly, The sufferings of Christ have taught me the value of reconciliation with God. While I fee these sufferings, and know whose sufferings they are, I am awfully instructed what it cost to redeem the foul of a finner, and thereby how great the bleffing of being reconciled to God. Here the demands of infinite justice upon finners are set manifestly before me. I fee what they are, in the fufferings of my incarnate God.— But here also I see the worth of the sacrifice, and proportionably of the benefit procured by it. These sufferings teach me the double bleffing of being faved from wrath, and accepted to God's favour. To regard myself no longer as a condemned criminal, under fentence of death, and an heir of hell, but as a fon of the Lord Almighty, whose sentence is reversed, and whose home is heaven; this is glorious. But what makes me eminently think it fo, is the manner by which I am thus pardoned and acquitted, thus accepted and glorified. When I fee my pardon procured, and my peace made through the fufferings of the Lamb of God, this shews me the misery I have escaped, and the riches I am heir to-how tremendous the one, how valuable the other! O that Christless finners would fee here their mifery; and that faints would learn from hence to make a right estimate of their privileges! see, my fellow finners, who carelefsly neglect this great falvation; fee the amazing justice and vengeance of God, which stands out against you. Ye are not in Christ. Therefore ye have no benefit from his fufferings. Ah, let his fufferings teach you what yours shall be. If God spared not his Son, will he spare you? If he bruised him and put him to grief, how will ye endure, when the vials of his wrath shall be poured out upon your heads? If the fufferings of Jesus made him cry out-Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; what will your cry be, when you shall be drinking to eternity the dregs of the cup of God's fury? O that ye would be wife! M 2

that now, while yet there is time, ye would flee from the wrath that is to come! and ye, my brethren, who are fled to this glorious hope that is fet before you, be fensible of the greatness of your privileges. Whatever they are, the sufferings of Jesus bought them for you. And let those sufferings declare their value. Ah, what a bleffing that forgiveness of fins, which was fo dearly bought! how valuable that peace with God, which cost so high a price! how inestimable that glory to come, which is the reward of the Redeemer's blood! fee here what ye have in possession, and what ye are heirs to! behold the fufferings of Jefus, and know your bleffings, and despise the little things of the world. Behold the sufferings of Jesus, and let nothing trouble you, for surely eye hath not feen what his fufferings have purchased for you. If need be, 'ye may be in heaviness through manifold temptations:' but look unto Jesus, and behold your crown; 'look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is for ever fet down on the right hand of the throne of 'God.' Yea, 'confider him that endured fuch contradiction of finners against himself, lest ye be, (and so doing ye will onot be) wearied and faint in your minds.

## SERMON XX.

### Acts xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

WE have already treated of the sufferings of Christ, and considered the cause of them, and their essicacy to the purposes designed by them: and are now led on by the order of the Creed to his Crucifixion and Death.

As there was a necessity that he should suffer by crucifixion, to fulfil certain types and prophecies relative thereto; so was it also necessary that his crucifixion should issue in death, to the end that thereby atonement might be made for sin.

That he was indeed crucified, and that he died, are points, as to the fact, fo fully fet forth in the scriptures, and with the circumstances regarding the one and the other you are fo well acquainted, that I need not take up your time in describing or proving either of them. What is principally defigned in the profession of his crucifixion and death, is the benefits obtained thereby: for when I declare myself affured that the Son of God was crucified and died, I mean to profess my stedfast belief, that by this means all those ends for which he was crucified and died were effectually answered. Wherefore, having shewn already wherein the merit and efficacy of these his sufferings unto death do confift, to wit, in the dignity of his perfon, his perfect righteoufnefs, and the most eminent exercise of obedience, in his last work of giving himself a facrifice unto God; I am now to fet out particularly the ends of his fufferings and death, and to introduce the professor as maintaining his stedfast belief that they are answered by them, when he

fays,

fays, he not only suffered under Pontius Pilate, but adds, was

crucified, and dead. His meaning is to fay, I believe,

First, That he not only was crucified and flain, but did thereby make a full propitiation and atonement for fin. I fee. before Adam committed the fin of eating the forbidden fruit, the fentence of death denounced against him, if he should transgress that commandment, In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Wherefore, when I behold him eating of it, I plainly find him bringing himself under the before-declared sentence. Here was an act of disobedience; that disobedience was highly offensive and dishonourable to the majefty of God; and the transgressor was become by it liable to death. In this fituation what could he do? He could not undo what was done; that was impossible. The fact must stand against him for ever, Thou hast eaten of the tree whereof I charged thee that thou shouldst not eat. This would be true to eternity from the moment of his eating; and as long as it remained true, both the majesty of God would be offended by it, and the curse be upon Adam for it. From that moment he commenced a child of wrath, and fo must have remained to eternity, for any the least power he had to help himself out of it. The fact was irrevocable, therefore the offence and the punishment. And unless mercy interposed, and in such a way as to make amends for the offence, and to fulfil the curse, there was absolutely no more hope for him than for fallen angels.-That I had been any way concerned in this fact of Adam, I could not have imagined, had not the scriptures of God told me fo; although in that ignorance I should have been utterly at a loss for the reason why myself and the whole world are born in fin, and manifestly under sentence of death. But now I fee that thefe are penalties lying upon me and all men for the fin of Adam, and thereby that he stood as the representative of all his descendants. I can have no quarrel against this, without calling God's righteousness in question; for I see, in fact, the penalties of Adam's fin are charged on me; nor do I fee it any thing more inconfistent, that I should suffer thro' the fin of one covenant head, than that I should be accepted to God's favour through the righteousness of another. besides this, I am fully sensible, that in my own person I have been finning after the fimilitude of Adam's transgression, being disobedient to his command, and putting forth my hand

unto that which the Lord forbade me. So that if before fin entered into the world, the fentence of death was pronounced against it, whenever and in whomsoever it should be found, I am fensible that every way I am liable to that fentence; that being a finner before God, I have done fuch offence to the divine Majesty, and brought such a death on myself, as leaves me, confidered in myself, in an utterly undone, helpless, and hopeless condition. Nevertheless, finful, guilty, and condemned as I am, I have confidence towards God. I fee full amends made to the injured majesty of God, and the sentence of death fully executed in him, who, though he had done no fin, was made fin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. I fee the Lamb without foot and blemish taking away sin by the facrifice of himself. I see God purchasing the church with his own blood. I fee, and am fatisfied. I am convinced and pleafed that divine Majesty has received an ample vindication. tremble no more at the fentence of death, when I behold the Son of God expiring on the cross; while I am covered with confusion at myself (but alas! too, too little) in the fight of ! that amazing facrifice. Here I fet my foot, and finding myfelf fafe, I boldly ask, Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died.—Nor is this propitiation and atonement for fin, tho' indeed the foundation of all my other comforts, the only one that I draw from the crucifixion and death of Christ: for,

Secondly, Herein I fee all my enemies vanquished. I fee my Lord hanging victoriously on the cross, and conquering every adversary. Here I see that law of ordinances, whose multiplicity, strictness, and expence, were so burdensome a yoke, that none were able to bear, abolished in the fulfilment of all its design. When Jesus died, the vail of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom. Here I fee the moral law, as a law of works for righteousness, fulfilled in every tittle of its demands, and executed in every tittle of its curse, and as no longer therefore breathing out threatnings against the transgression of its precepts, now impracticable by us, but changed into a pleafant rule of delightful obedience. Here I fee the sting taken out of the hand of death. How horrible was his countenance wont to be! I heard the thunders of Sinai when he approached me. I faw the flashes of everlasting fire breaking out behind his back. I was difmayed. I cried for mercy. I looked upon the crofs. I confidered who hung there. My spirit

revived within me. Turning to death, I faid, Where is the fling? I faw, and was aftonished. The scene was changed. His dart terrified no more. His countenance was smoothed. He smiled, and seemed to say, I am thy friend. Here I see hell disappointed. Hell was waiting for all the race of mankind. The fentence was gone forth, and the place was prepared. The whole world was guilty without exception, and justice demanded recompence. Jesus would make atonement, and the stroke fell upon him. He died, and believers cannot perish. Here I see the devil dethroned. What can the accufer do, when God is reconciled? When the law condemns no more? When its penalty is executed to the full? When juftice appears on the fide of the finner? See, Satan, the iffue of thy rage and malice! in perfecuting the Son of God to the death, thou hast been thine own destroyer. That very death has difarmed thee of all thy might, and even fuch a babe in Christ as I am, is able to put thee to flight. Here I see fin receiving its deadly blow. It was laid upon him that had done no fin. He bore it to the cross. There it was crucified, brought to public shame, and the power of it taken away.-For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of finful flesh, and for fin condemned fin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit .-Here finally I fee the world fubdued, the world in all its strength. Jesus had before defeated the attempts of worldly glory, pomp, wealth, and ease; and now on the cross he stands the shock of worldly shame and suffering; this he endured, that he despised. The ingratitude of friends, the being forfaken of all men, the being fingly exposed in the hands of implacable enemies to all that malice fet on fire of hell could invent or cruelly execute, made no impression upon him.-Be of good cheer, thou hadft faid, I have overcome the world .-Truth, Lord, I fee it to be a vanquished enemy. Thus looking on the cross, I see all my adversaries put to confusion.— But more than all this,

Thirdly, I see there the richest blessings purchased for me. There I see sin punished, and the sinner pardoned. There I see persect reconciliation and peace with a holy God. There the adoption of children. There the purchase of the Spirit.—There the freest intercourse opened between heaven and earth.

There

There I fee the foundation of all the Mediator's glory, and of all the plenteous blessings the church receives from him. To that I owe all my mercies here, and all my hope in glory.—Had not Jesus died, I had been still a child of wrath, and bond slave of sin. But he died, and making peace, sent forth the Spirit; that blessed Spirit, who awakened me when I lay asseep in sin, explained to me from the very word of God the precious benefits procured by the Redeemer's blood, converted my heart unto God in the power of what he shewed me, and is daily comforting me in all my tribulations, and holding up my heart and my steps in my way to the heavenly Zion, where I would be.

Such now is my meaning, when I fay he was crucified and dead. Thus I make my profession of the atonement he made, the victories he atchieved, the bleffings he procured, when having, as his office was, fulfilled all righteoufness, he bowed his gracious head, faid, It is finished, and yielded up the ghost. Shall a Heathen centurion, who knew nothing of these glorious mysteries, when he saw but the manner of his suffering and death, and the figns that attended it, cry out with great fear, Truly this was the Son of God? And shall not I, who know him to be fuch by a thousand testimonies, see him submitting to be crucified and flain for me, and am acquainted with all these valuable benefits which he has thereby obtained for me; shall not I with greater joy cry out and fay, Truly this was the Son of God? Shall the fun, the earth, the very dead, bear testimony to the sufferings and death of Immanuel, and I feel nothing? Can I once think or fay, "he was crucified and dead," without adoration, and joy, and shame, and forrow? But,

Fourthly, I am well persuaded that all my supposed belief of these great things done and obtained by the sufferings and death of Jesus, would be but vain imagination, unless they had a suitable effect on my heart and life; and therefore, as an important part of my professing his death, I do farther declare,

First, That I judge it my bounden duty, that it is my deliberate choice, and that I am fully determined, his grace enabling me, to live to him, who thus died for me. I declare that I am not my own, that I am bought with a price; and I most carnestly desire and determine to lay myself out, and all that

I have, according to his will, and for his interest and glory. My time and my abilities of whatever fort, I value chiefly for for this end; and as I know that I cannot have a more noble defign in life, indeed that this is the whole defign of my being what I am, so do I most cordially consent unto such a conduct as shall be honourable to him, and serviceable to the interests of his kingdom. Wherefoever his interests call me out to appear for him, there I determine to go at all adventures; and although I should be alone in the midst of the earth, although all others had forfaken him, and, as Elijah supposed was his case, I only was left to confess him, yet I would not deny the Lord that bought me, nor give any countenance to the ways of a wicked world, or encouragement to the kingdom of darknefs. Let him use me as he pleases; I am his purchased posfession. I hear him saying with his own mouth, 'He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth fon or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his crofs, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.' This I hear, and with it, in the full intent of the words, I fincerely confent; and beforehand I declare myfelf a traitor and a rebel, if in any thing I act contrary to them. So,

Secondly, I determine and declare, that I will not be moved from following my dying mafter by any manner or measure of fufferings which may befal me for so doing. I expect to be a partaker of his fufferings. That I have not been more fo is owing to my too finful conformity with the world. I have been told that all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution; nor, though I live in a Christian country, do I judge the case thereby so far altered, as to give me any ground of expectation that some way or other I shall not suffer for Christ's fake: for alas! I see this Christian country is in general but a part of that wicked world, which Christ assures me will hate the disciples as well as the Master before them.-But, God enabling me, I will not be moved. I will follow my Master whithersoever he leads me, though whithersoever I go tribulations shall await me, yea, though I should fuffer the loss of all things. If it must be so, I will reckon the reproach of Christ greater treasures than the riches, the favour, or esteem of the world; nor can I think of forfaking him, whatever it cost me, while I think of what it cost him to redeem my foul. Can I look upon the cross of Christ, and so fear the reproach of men and be afraid of their revilings, as to crucify him afresh, and put him to an open shame?—Can I look upon the cross, and act over again the part of Judas, to serve the purposes of my interest and ambition, or, like Peter, deny that I know him, lest I should share in his sufferings? No, I have sworn, and am stedsastly purposed, that I will not be ashamed of Christ crucified; and that, as a faithful soldier of his, I will manfully sight under his banner, though the world and the devil should be never so suriously in arms against me, and that I will continue so doing unto the end of my days, as I have any hope of meeting him with comfort when he shall appear on the clouds of heaven. And besides this.

Thirdly, It is not less my defire and purpose to be always conformed to the likeness of his death, in the daily crucifixion and mortification of all my corrupt affections. Shall I fay, as the truth is, these would have brought me to the bottomless pit, unless Jesus had died for me! these are they which caused all his fufferings and all his shame! these more properly than any others were his betrayers and murderers! and when I have feen and faid all this, shall I spare them, shall I give them entertairment, or deal gently with them? They that are Christ's crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts. His I profels myself; and I trust I shall give him this convincing proof of the fincerity wherewith I make this profession, that I am always at war with his worst enemies within my heart. I am not rash and unadvised in this determination. I have confidered the crofs of Christ, and have seen what brought him hither; and therefore stedfastly purpose against all those his murderers without referve. I will yield to the pleadings of none of them. When I fee I will deny them. Nay, and I will use every means of weakening their power, without sparing any manner of pains in doing fo. And fince I know them to be exceedingly fubtle and deceiving, I will use every help, which either the word of God, or felf-inquiry, or the observations of others can afford me to bring them to light, that they may be crucified and flain, though they be as dear to me as an only fon, or as useful as a right hand. Thus liv-

ing to Jesus, and suffering for him, and crucifying my sins

I defire to make that profession good in my life, which I make with my mouth, when I say, I believe that he was crucified and dead.

And now, brethren, I think we can hardly have failed of making some reflections upon the whole of this declaration, as it has been going forward. I would ask, Is it scriptural or no? Are these things really contained in confessing the faith of Christ crucified? If they be not, or as far as they are not, pay no regard to them, and impute it to my weakness. But if they be the words of truth and foberness, can we adopt and make them our own? If we cannot, where is our faith in a crucified Jesus? Shall we judge that we believe in him as faving us by his blood, if we are indulging those very fenfual, earthly, and devilish affections which were the real causes of that blood-shedding; if we would live to Christ, were it not for the reproach or violence of men, but are, as it is, refuling to go forth, bearing his reproach; if we are living to ourfelves, and far from confidering what his honour and interests demand, are only considering and consulting our own; if we fet no fuch value upon the bleffings purchased by the death of Christ, as we do on the vain riches, pleasures, and praise of the world; and instead of rejoicing in the deliverance which Christ obtained upon the cross from all our enemies, are quietly subjecting ourselves to them, to the world, to fin; and if fo, to the devil, and then furely to the curse of the law, which is hell, and in the mean time to the fear of death? If this be our case, can we persuade ourselves that we believe in Christ crucified, or that we make any real account of his propitiation and atonement as poor, guilty, condemned criminals, who, but for an interest therein, must perish for ever? We cannot suppose it. We see plainly the contrary. But, alas, it is only while I am speaking that we think of it at all. You have feen your faces, I fear many of you, my dear friends ? O forget not, I befeech you, what manner of men you are.— See your deformity, fee your misery, and betake you seriously to that blood to which, though you confider it not, you are daily indebted for God's patience and forbearance. well fay, Why will you die? Since it is every way so evident, that God hath no pleasure in your death. Happy they, who can make the profession before us, and whose hearts and lives

prove the truth of it. Happy they, every hour they live.— Their fins are pardoned, their persons are accepted, the Lord Almighty is their Father, all things are theirs, Satan cannot hurt them, death is their friend, the Spirit their comforter, heaven their home, and they are hastening daily to it. Ah, who would not be able to say, 'I believe in Christ crucisifed?'

# SERMON XXI.

#### Acts xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

FROM our Lord's crucifixion and death we pass on to his burial and descent into hell. The history of the former in all its circumstances is plainly set forth in the evangelists, to whom I shall refer you for the truth and particulars of it. And as to the latter, without troubling you with the various opinions relative thereto, I shall be content to declare only what appears to be the true one, that the soul of Jesus being separated from his body by death, was conveyed, during the time of the separation, into such receptacles as the souls of other persons used to be, so that he underwent the whole law of death, as it became him to do who was made sin for us, his body lying in the grave, and his soul going to the place where the souls of men who die for their own sins, are kept till the day of resurrection. In a word, that as he died, so he was in death just what other people are.

But the believer has other things in view than the bare acknowledgement of the fact, when he fays, 'I believe that he

was buried and descended into hell.'

First, He professes that Christ was both buried, and did defeend into hell, as well to declare his belief of the absolute certainty of his death, as thereby to prepare the way for his affent to the reality of his resurrection, which must be strictly and truly such, if his body was thus laid in the grave, and his separated soul departed to the place provided for the spirits of men, when disunited from the body. The believer therefore

means to declare his stedfast persuasion that Jesus was in every respect dead; not only crucified, but actually and persectly dead, so that if afterwards he was alive again, it was a proper resurrection. But this is not all his meaning. He intends to

fay farther, and principally,

Secondly, That he condescended to this state of the dead, in discharge of his office. This, as it was the lowest condition of his abasement, so was it not less necessary than any other of his actions. He was the representative of finners; and as they were not only partakers of flesh and blood, but also because of fin under fentence of death, their foul and body to be torn afunder, this to return to the dust, and that to exist in a state feparate from its old companion till the day of re-union; therefore it behoved him not only to make atonement for fin, and thereby to take away the eternal curse of the law, but also to fubmit to the farther humiliation of being for a feafon in the state of the dead both in body and foul. For a season I fay; for there was not only an impossibility that he should be holden of death, and detained his prisoner as others are, because of the power of that divine nature, in union with which both his body and foul did fubfift, while the one was lying in the grave, and the other was descended into hell; but also there was no necessity for it, because justice being now satisfied, death had no right in him, or claim upon him. And therefore, when he had lain in the state of death long enough to be in all things like unto us, after a short season he was loofed from the pains, or rather bands thereof, to convince us that death was a vanquished enemy, which had no force nor right to detain him, who being the Son of God, had taken away fin by the facrifice of himfelf. Wherefore,

Thirdly, I am persuaded that he lay in the state of death in a peculiar way, not as one conquered by death, but as he, who having overcome upon the cross him that had the power of death, went into the state of the dead to take possession, as it were, of the first fruits of his victory. He lay in the state of the dead indeed, that in every thing he might be like unto us; and while I see him in this estate, I acknowledge the horrid vileness of sin which brought the Lord of glory to such an abasement: I confess myself to be sinful dust and ashes; I own my utter insufficiency to maintain myself against the approach of death, or to deliver myself out of his power, when he shall

once have feized and carried me into his dark abode; but though Jesus lay in the state of the dead, it was to rob death of its terrors, to make it appear that now there is nothing for formidable in the laying down this earthly tabernacle in the grave, or in the foul's departure from the whole present state of things, into an untried, unknown, and unimagined kind of fubfistence without the body in a spiritual world. In this state of the dead my Lord made a short continuance in his way of glory; he explored the depths of these mansions that wait for me; he made a visit to the grave and hell; he went as a forerunner, to let me fee that though the way be dark, it is not dreadful; he would go through it himself before me, that I might be reconciled to the paffage by which I must go to everlasting life; (he went as a conqueror to receive the submission and the homage of this old king of terrors, even in his own dominions.) When at any time I forget my Lord was buried and descended into hell, I find something more than awful in the thought of my body's being laid in the grave, eaten up by worms, and mouldering to dust; and I am ready to fay to my foul, To what unknown condition wilt thou be transported, when thou must leave the things that are here for ever? Wilt thou be reduced to nothing? or wilt thou wander up and down at the will of other more powerful spirits, visiting tombs, and hovering about the folitary places where bodies fleep? Or what else will become of thee? But when I fee Jefus in the state of death, I am reconciled and perfectly set at ease. I cry out, Grave, where is thy victory? I say, My Redeemer was buried, and descended into hell, and I will securely venture where he has gone before me; though I know not what it is to die, though the grave and hell import a state wherewith I am utterly unacquainted, yet will I cheerfully enter the unexperienced regions of the dead, and fear no evil from a state of being which my Saviour by his presence therein has vindicated from possibility of misery. But,

Fourthly, While I thus declare my belief of Christ's burial and descent into hell, in the execution of his mediatorial office, and to make the way to heaven safe and comfortable, I profess my obligation and purpose of being conformed here-

unto.

First, In an acknowledgement of the vanity of my present estate.

Secondly,

Secondly, In a daily dying to this present life.

Thirdly, In preparing myself for the approaching state of se-

paration.

Fir/t, When I profess that Christ was buried, and descended into hell as my representative, I mean to acknowledge the vanity of my present estate. Pride did once persuade me to think myself something. It suggested to me the health, the vigour, the comeliness of my body; it whispered to my foolish heart the more noble qualifications of my reasonable powers, my parts, and wisdom, and knowledge; it insisted on various things that diftinguished me from others, and intimated that I was lord of the creatures. Fired with the too pleafing thought, I conceited myself considerable, and was restless to be more fo. I would make a figure; I would not remain destitute of any reputable qualification, I would entarge my circumstances, I would have wherewith to take my full range of eafe and pleafure. I faid, when I shall have obtained such additions, and difengaged myself from such restraints, I shall have the full defire of my heart. Thus was I borne along by the pride of life, depending altogether upon the supposed sufficiencies of this present world, when Providence brought death before me by taking off a dear relation. I attended the dying bed. The fight shook my confidence, I saw the labouring body panting for breath, the whole frame shattered, even to the loss of every fense, and heard the expiring groan. I retired in confusion, and was forced to say, Surely man is vanity! what profit or help can the world afford against death? I felt the meaning of these awful words, What is man that is a worm, and the fon of man that is a worm? I faid, I will be wife, I will consider my latter end My friends came about me; with a decent civility they lamented my lofs, faid fomething of the departed; and fell into ordinary conversation, for diverting my grief. I thought the discourse unseasonable; the views I had before me could not permit me to relish it. They departed, and others supplied their place with the same mistaken kindness. The last ceremonies for the dead passed over; I returned to my former employments. Infenfibly my eyes closed to the thought of death, and the world began to recover its former importance. Just then mercy interposed. A thought, I know not how, forced itself upon me, that death was the wages of fin It lay upon my mind. It would not be removed. Death seemed near, and I saw sin was the only cause of it.-No. 3 lt

It came fo mightily upon me, that I was driven to my knees. I grew uneasy. I took the Bible. Every word I read condemned me. I could fee nothing behind me but fin; and death stood threatning to cut me down. I plainly faw my mifery and helplessness. Wherewith could I possibly come before the Lord? I foon found there was no help for me but in God. But would God have mercy upon me? I had heard of Iefus, and had a thousand times called him my Saviour; but now I found that I had never believed him to be the Saviour he is. Yet I knew there was no help for me but in him. I was fatisfied that I must fearch the scriptures, which testify of him. I did fo both with diligence and importunate prayer,-From that bleffed book the light shone upon me. I saw there that he was the Son of God, and grew by degrees acquainted with the purpose of his coming into the world. The more I knew of this amazing method for faving finners, the more I admired and liked it. I faw the import and meaning of all the actions of Jesus, his life and death, his resurrection from the ftate of death, and exaltation to the right hand of God. These shewed me my real character as well as God's. Here I have feen, and do fee myself a sinner, a criminal, a wretch configned to the dominion of death, and by death to be delivered over to judgment and hell. Hence I have learned to judge what the world is, and every man in it. In my continual thoughts I follow my Redeemer from heaven to the cradle, from the cradle to the crofs, from thence to the grave and hell, and all for my falvation, and cry out in the bottom of my spirit, What then is man? O what a lie is pride? And where are all the fufficiencies of the world? I fay to my foul, The Lord of glory took on him thy estate to fave thee, and see whither it has brought him, low as the very grave and hades. See, my foul, fee the truth of thy condition. It is this teaches me what I could never learn from the death of thousands about me, from all the uncertainties and vexations of life, from all the reasonings with which philosophy could furnish me; nay, which I never knew from all the scriptures of God, till I learnt from them the meaning of Christ's death, burial, and descent into hell. Here I learnt the vanity, the misery of myfelf and the world. Here all my pride bows, and I feel myfelf to be nothing, and all the pomp of life to be a dream and delusion. Wherefore, Se-

Secondly, Knowing as I thus do the vanity of my present estate, I profess it my duty, and declare that it is, and shall be my daily endeavour to die unto it. I look on myfelf as in the grave with Christ. I acknowledge the import of my baptism, and regard myself as buried with him therein into death. That burial, I purpose, God enabling me, to make good I am dead to fin by profession, being buried with him; nor can I any farther engage my heart in the pursuits of this present life. I have determined therefore, as one buried with Jesus, to live the rest of my time upon earth in the constant mortification of every earthly affection. I will look upon my Master lying in the grave, and fay, Lord, I will die with thee .-My life is at thy disposal, take it when thou pleasest, when thou needest for thy interest and glory .- And while thou sufferest me to be here, still will I die with thee; for as one dead I have renounced the world. As if I were already laid in my grave, I will endeavour to difregard the pleafures, the interests, the praise, the honours of life. O take me more abundantly out of this prefent evil world, and fashion my heart and life into a greater conformity to thy death and burial. Enable me increasingly to die to the things of fight and fense; to use the world as not abusing it; to be content in every state; to enjoy the bleffings of life with a greater indifference and readiness to part with them, at thy will; to endure every kind of affliction, especially for thy fake, with enlarging patience and thankfulness; to fear always, and peculiarly in every change of condition; to fit more easy to good as well as to evil report; to be more difengaged from the men as well as things of the world; to get farther above the influence of worldly example and man's authority, the apprehension of poverty, and the dread of depending on others; and grant, that I may be able to prove, more and more, the truth of this my death, through the Spirit, to every present thing, by the meekness, the forbearance, the peaceableness, the liberality, the contentedness, the absence of all carefulness for the morrow, manifest in my whole conduct. Lord, I would be perfectly buried with thee; I would have the whole spirit of a pilgrim here upon earth. Like one feeking another country, I would live. O let me have the whole proof of thy burial in my heart and life. And let me testify my belief of thy burial and descent into hell, by such a temper and conduct, as shall convince those who observe my conversation, that N 2 there

there is a power in thee as it were lying in the grave, to raife the fouls of thy people above the love of every thing great, and the dread of every thing terrible here below; and to force the world of unbelievers to own, that there is that in thy religion which can make a man, even in the abundance of all things, to defire to depart and be with thee, as far better. Thus do I determine, endeavour, and pray to die daily unto this present

life, as buried with thee. And,

Thirdly, In conformity with thy lying in the state of the dead, I would be preparing for my approaching state of separation. I determine to regard, and defire to treat this body of mine as under fentence of death, as foon to depart into the grave where my Lord also lay. Wherefore I am resolved to bring it under, and keep it in subjection, that in none of its appetites it may have the indulgence, which I well know it will be always craving. I will endeavour to maintain it in the strictest temperance, nor will I give it any allowance of sloth or excefs. I will no more pamper it with gluttonous or luxurious living, nor yield to any of its folicitations, for gratification in drink, nor fuffer it to defile my foul with its lascivious inclinations. I will be continually putting it in remembrance, that it had a principal hand in the first sin, that it has led me into numberless iniquities, that it is soon to return to the dust out of which it was taken, and, were it not for Jesus, that it would lie for ever in the flames that never shall be quenched. I will prepare it as I can for the departing hour, and reconcile it to the expectation of being laid in the grave, by the confideration of Christ's burial. In a word, it shall be waiting for the change, and taught to meet it without drawing back.

And for my foul, it shall be my endeavour that it be every day more and more furnished for the world of spirits. To enter into that invisible world, nothing but holiness, I am well assured, can prepare me. I will not therefore say, Soul, thou hast grace enough already to qualify thee for a happy departure; but, soul, the day is at hand, put on the whole armour of light. Thou must soon go into the invisible world; if thou have not faith, thou wilt not be bold to adventure when the hour of departure comes; nor must every measure of faith be sufficient, but thy faith must be fruitful, it must make thee love God and man; yea, and thy faith and love must be such as

will

will make thee full of the hope of glory. Now, therefore, forget what is behind, and reach unto what is before. Thou must be adding grace unto grace. Thou must be living a great deal more in heaven. My foul, thou must not be weary in well doing; if thou wilt reap, thou must not faint.-Christ went unto the place of separate spirits; art thou ready, art thou willing to go thither also? What? Art thou not yet prepared? Art thou defiring a farther respite? Then be diligent, make all things fure. Art thou afraid of going into the untried estate, where spirits only dwell? Think more of Christ's descent. Be more persuaded there is no danger in the way he trode before thee. Have it more upon thy heart, that this is the only way to heaven. To-day, said Christ to the thief, thou shalt be with me in paradife: and wilt thou be afraid of being in paradife also? Thus I am determined to exercise myself in body and soul, preparing for my state of separation. And were I not thus employed, I could not perfuade myself that I had any real belief of Christ's burial and descent into hell, in the discharge of his office, and as the re-

presentative of believers. You see here what is the real meaning of this, as you have before, of the former points of faith. And if the article before us mean all this, may we not well take up Christ's words and fay, 'When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?' Be pleased to observe, that the end of hearing fermons is not to pass an hour in what is called a good way, but that we may enter into the reproofs, the corrections, the instructions, that are ministered to us. God expects therefore that we should consider what we have heard this day, examine ourselves by it, lay it up in our hearts, and be the better for it. Let us look to it, I befeech you, for God will not be mocked. And it is easy to see who will be the losers in the end, if we will not take heed how we hear. Give us grace, therefore, O Lord, feriously to consider before thee what we have heard from thee; and grant, that as we are baptized into the death of thy bleffed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, so by continual mortifying our corrupt affections, we may be buried with him, and that through the grave and gate of death we may pass to our joyful resurrection, for his merits, who died and was buried, and rose again for us, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

## SERMON XXII.

### Acrs xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

HE argument, upon which faith in Jesus, as an all-sufficient Saviour, does stand stedsast and unshaken, lies in the united efficacy of his qualifications and transactions.—Knowing him to be Christ, the only Son of the Father, our Lord; and knowing also what he has done, is doing, and will do, all that the glory of God in the salvation of us his sallen creatures could require, we remain satisfied that he is 'able' to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him.' We have been for some time considering the latter part of this argument, and bringing forth the grounds of sact upon which, in concurrence with the qualifications of Jesus, we rest assured of his being Jesus a Saviour. And now proceed in that view to his resurrection from the dead.

We have feen him as a man of forrows, and have attended him to the crofs, the grave, and hades. Henceforward we are to view him in a more fplendid character, to fee his divine nature difplaying itself in a more glorious manner, and his human nature highly exalted, his reasonable soul enriched with all knowledge and grace possible to a creature, his body spiritualized and gloristed, and his whole person advanced to the highest honour at the right hand of God.

That circumstance of his exaltation which relates to his refurrection is now to be considered. Concerning which our believer, proceeding in his profession, would be understood to

mean,

First, I am fatisfied of it as an unquestionable matter of fact.

fact, proved to be fuch by the most incontestible evidence, that both Jesus did rife again from the dead, and also that he did fo on the third day, according to the scriptures. 'As Joonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, fo was the Son of man to be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.' But 'his foul was not to be left in hell, e neither his flesh to see corruption.' And I have the most undoubted testimony, that on the third day he actually rose from the dead; for on the third day in the morning, the women cannot find him in the fepulchre; an angel affures them he is rifen from the dead; prefently they fee him alive, as do his disciples in a body that very evening, unto whom then, and frequently afterwards, he gives the most evident proofs, that it is he himself, not a spirit, but that very same person whom they fo well and familiarly knew upon long acquaintance; that same body which they knew had been crucified and left in death, now again joined unto that fame foul which before informed it. Nor is there wanting a standing testimony of fact to the truth of his refurrection unto this very day. For if he be not risen from the dead, he cannot be in heaven; but yet that Holy Ghost, who was promised solely upon his going to the Father, was not only poured out in miraculous gifts on the apostles and others, but on them and all believers fince, in all fanctifying operations, as the declared confequence of his life and dominion at the right hand of God. Herose from the dead. And no wonder, fince even while dead he was the Son of God; the union of the two natures still subfifted, and though the two parts of the human nature were separated, yet neither part was for one moment disunited from the divine. Wherefore I do not fay, he was raised from the dead, (although raising the dead be evidently a work of divine power) but he rose from the dead, as being possessed of that divine power in himself, whereby he rose. Nor, although I find his resurrection ascribed to the Father, have I reason therefore to question that he raised himself, since I find him taking this work unto himself in these plainest words of his, Destroy this temple, (speaking of his body) and in three days I will raise it up. Acknowledging therefore the unity of the eternal Trinity, I find myself under no difficulty to say, he rose again from the dead, while also I say, God the Father effected and wrought that work-Thus I declare myself perfectly

feetly fatisfied of the truth of this important action. But this is not all my meaning: for when I fay, ! He rose again the

third day from the dead,' I do,

Secondly, Intend to express my belief of certain glorious benefits which are hereby held forth and secured to me. For hereby I plainly see, not only that he is the Son of God, evidently approving himself such by this divine act of rising from the dead, but that as the Son of God rising from the dead in the discharge of his office, he has made the most public declaration,

First, Of the justification of the ungodly by his death.

Secondly, Of his being Lord of all things.

Thirdly, Of the resurrection of all the members of his body.

Wherefore,

First, When I say, He rose again the third day from the dead, I profess my belief of there having thereby been made the most public declaration of the justification of the ungodly by his death. He died for our fins. And the way whereby I am affured that, by the facrifice of his death, he took away fin in respect of its guilt and punishment is, that I see him rise again from the dead: because, inasmuch as I know that death is the wages of fin, I am affured he could not have rifen again from the dead unless by his death he had made satisfaction to the justice of God for fin, whereof death was purely the wages. I know him to be a public person, that he undertook for finners, putting himfelf in their place; and that our fins with all their contequences were imputed to him. But now I fee him who thus was made fin for us, rifen from the dead. Hereupon, I ask myself, Was not death one of the consequences of our fins? And if it was, how is it that I fee him that was charged with our fins rifing out of the grave? Could this possibly be, if the atonement had not been satisfactory? This I dare not deny, unless I would affert that he was not made fin for us, (in which case I could not find the least imaginable cause of his death) or unless I would insist that death was not a consequence of sin. Wherefore when I see Jesus alive from the dead, I discern the most public testimony of God the Father to the availableness of his satisfaction, and Jesus not only proclaiming publicly the justification of ungodly finners, but also, as were by a legal procedure, when he had satisfied the demands that justice had against them, taking out their

acquittal. Thus I declare my belief of his rifing again for our justification; and while I cannot question the reality of his resurrection, I have such an answer at hand to the accusations of conscience, as silences them all. In the sight of all my numberless iniquities, the penalty of the least of which is death, I take up my word, and say, 'It is Christ that died, 'yearather, that is risen again. It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?' I think it now no longer strange, that the whole office of the apostles is declared to be this one thing, 'to witness the resurrection:' for if it be true that he rose from the dead, it cannot but be evident that he is the Son of God, that by his death there had been made full propitiation for sin; consequently that in his name, and his only, there is falvation.

Secondly, I regard the refurrection of Jesus as a no less public declaration of his being Lord of all things. He was indeed not put into public possession of the dominion over all things, till he fat down at the right hand of God. But before this he plainly shewed by his resurrection his power over all things. When by his sacrifice on the cross he had made satisfaction for fin, it remained only that he should take possession of his conquests, and proceed to lead his enemies captive. The two first of these were the grave and hell. Into them the conqueror enters, and rifing from thence, declares them vanquished. See,' he fays as it were by this action, ' the first fruits of my victory. I was dead, and am alive again. It was declared in my name of old, O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction; and behold the fulfilment of this word, in my refurrection from the dead! See then if I am onot the Lord, who have all power in heaven and earth. It is I that have the keys of death and hell; I took them by my might out of the hands of him that had the power of death. Yea, Lord, my foul replies, I acknowledge thy dominion.— As the only-begotten of the Father, thou art Lord of all things by the right of Deity; and here I see thee in the mediatorial character, eminently proving thy dominion over all things.— I fee thee, in despite of Satan, strengthened as he was by the curse of the law, going down and leading death captive. I ask, Who is this that cometh up from the grave? This whom death cannot detain? Who by his arm bursts as under the gates of darkness, and brings death disarmed of his scythe from forth forth his black dominions? What man, what God is this! He must be man to be capable of rising, and God to rise by his own power. And if he died and rose again, (and what marvel if he did die, that he should rise again?) he must needs be Lord of both the dead and the living. I own thy dominion. With Thomas, I, alas, too flow of heart to believe, cry out upon the force of such conviction, My Lord, and my God! I yield myself to thy dominion. O keep me by thy matchless power. Keep me from the curse of the law, which thou hast taken away by bearing it; keep me from the rage of Satan whom thou hast vanguished; keep me till death, and keep me in death, my departed spirit in paradife during its state of separation, and my body, when it shall be reduced to its original dust, unto the day of resurrection; and then, thou Lord of all things, bring me forth foul and body from the flate of death, to glory and life according to the working, whereby thou art able even to subdue all things unto thyself: for I declare thee to be, what by thy refurrection thou hast declared

thyself, Lord of all. And,

Thirdly, I avouch in thy refurrection that of all the living members of thy body. This thou as the head didst declare, when thou didst rise from the dead. Are they real members of thy body, actually joined unto thee? And how then couldst thou rife from the dead, and they not be rifen with thee and in thee? Art thou only rifen for thyself? or was it thy whole defign in rifing, to affure that there should be a resurrection of the dead? Didst thou not rise as the representative and head of thy people? And if fo, does not thy refurrection declare them rifen with thee? Thou art rifen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. What meaneth this? Are first fruits only an assurance of a harvest ready at hand? are they not even part of it? Else how were they the first fruits? Thou didst not die nor rise again to thyself. Thou didst die for us, and when thou camest out of thy grave, didst declare us rifen in thee. I know that thou art alive from the dead, and believing in thy name, I know that I am joined to thee, and therefore risen with thee. We know that our Redeemer liveth; and we know for that reason his people are as furely rifen with him, as if they had already heard the found of the last trumpet, and he had now fashioned their vile body like unto his glorious body. They must pass through the grave,

grave, and after their flesh worms shall destroy this body, yet Jesus by his resurrection declares them already risen in him. O how unspeakable the benefit and the comfort of this faith! Did I not experience the power of my Lord's resurrection, in the influence it has upon me, and the comfort it gives me certainly to know that I am risen with Christ, I should certainly conclude that I did not truly believe that he was risen from the dead. As an important part therefore of my profession, when I say, I believe that he rose again the third day from the dead, I mention this my stedsaft belief of my being risen with him, wherein I avow my obligation of conformity to his life, and the cause I have to triumph in this belief a-

gainst the fear of death.

First, Believing that we are rifen with Christ, I avow my obligation of conformity to his life. As one rifen with Christ it is my duty, my defire, and my purpose, to seek those things which are above, and to let my affections on them, and not on things on the earth. I would be continually reflecting, how one who is rifen with Christ to a spiritual and eternal world, ought to live while he is here upon earth? What should be his views, his ruling objects, his aim, and pursuit a what he should renounce, and what cleave to, to what he should fit indifferent, and what he should value, what he should fear, and what he should defire. I would be often thinking within myself, were a man really risen from the dead, as we now only are in our representative, what would be his employment? What thoughts would he have of God. and of Jesus, and what of the world? And I would be endeavouring to draw my spirit and conduct into an increasing conformity with the same, as far as my circumstances in this life should possibly permit. I would live in the world as taken out of it, and though I am not in heaven, I would live as if I were in it. I would have my mind under the influence of God's presence, as if I were standing at his right hand, and I would by faith behold the glory of Jesus, as if I saw him upon the throne of his glory; I would have my heart delighting in the worship and service of God, as if I was joining in the anthems of heaven, and my foul stood ready, like the angels, to do od's commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word; I would love others, as if I were placed in the mansions of the bleffed; I would live to the glory of God,

as if there were none around me but his most dutiful servants; I would have every fenfual, earthly, and devilish defire dead in me, as if I were numbered among the spirits of just men made perfect; I would regard the world as if I was in heaven, neither debauched by its gratifications, nor diffressed by its adversities; I would be pleasing God in all things as they do in heaven, myself in nothing, nor those who are about me, but for their good and edification; and in all things I would be pleasing God with a heavenly cheerfulness; I would vield to no worldly bias, nor confult my eafe, or interest, or indulgence, any more than if I was lying in the bosom of Abraham; to fay all in a word, I would be just like Christ, as he was, so would I also be, in the world As rifen with him, I would efteem nothing in the world but for the use I might make of it to the glory of God, and the happiness of my neighbours; I would lay myself out in doing good, nor count my life of any consequence but as it might serve these best of purposes. Thus would I have my conversation in heaven, as being rifen with Christ. I would, but alas, how do I fail! yet this is my defire, my aim, my endeavour. And though in every thing I come short, yet still I am determined to press on, to give no ground willingly to my fpiritual enemies, nor to give out in discouragement (though after all I am nothing) but be labouring to grow into a greater conformity with the life of Jesus. Give me leave to interrupt the professor one moment, while I observe, that these are his real desires, under the influence of faith in a risen Redeemer; and how different they are from the prospects and purposes of those, whose hearts are given up to the pleasures of the world, and the pride of life, is too obvious to need illustration. O what a wide distance is there between a state of unbelief and of faith! but to proceed,

Secondly, Our believer avows the cause he has to triumph against the fears of death, in the belief of his being risen with Christ. Is Christ risen from the dead, he says, and are we risen with him? Is he, who died for our fins, risen again for our justification? Hereby is the resurrection of true believers put out of question? And can we not effectually rise with Christ, till we are passed through the grave whither he went before us? Then surely I see the sting of death taken out.—Is death formidable, because it is the wages of sin? But Jesus declared the justification of believers, and publicly took out their acquittal, by rising from the dead. But do we still fear,

because death is a state of separation, an unknown and untried state, from whence no man hath come to give an account of it, and whereof it has not pleafed God to give us any particular information in the scriptures, and concerning our deliverance out of which, many distressing apprehensions are apt to arise. Yet still the resurrection of Jesus will bear us out here also. For where is Jesus? He is not in the grave; he is rifen, and is alive, and liveth for evermore. fort is, that we are risen with him. And if he be risen, and we with him, then the darkness of the passage, or any thing relative to that state, need not make us afraid. Here I see support against death, as the wages of fin, and death as the laying down of these earthly tabernacles; even in this one word, 'Christ is risen from the dead. Why then art thou fo heavy, O my foul, and why art thou fo disquieted within me?" Why doth death appear fo terrible? Is it because thou art not willing to part with the world? No, not fo. Is it then that thou art afraid of the confequences? Wherefore? Because of fin? But see here Christ has proved that to be taken out of the way. Or is it because thou knowest not what death is, and what shall come after it? But say not that neither, my soul, for thou art rifen with Christ, and heir to all that he inherits: and wouldst thou defire a better estate than to be with him where he is? Dost thou really believe Christ is risen? Think then of that; be strong in that faith; weigh well the import of his refurrection, and thy fears will affwage, death will lofe his terrors, and thou wilt be ready to cry out, Death, where is thy sting? Or rather, with the great apostle, I desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better. Lose not, my foul, the comfort of believing. Let thy faith in a rifen Jesus raise thee to a newness of life; and then stagger not through unbelief, for as furely as Christ is risen from the dead, he rose for thy justification, and thou art risen with him.

Let us conclude the whole with the Collect for Eafter-day.

Almighty God, who through thy only-begotten Son Jesus

Christ, hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of

everlasting life we humbly befeech thee, that as by thy spe-

cial grace preventing us, thou dost put into our minds good defires, so by thy continual help we may bring the same to

good effect, through Jesus Christ our Lord; who liveth and

reigneth, with thee and the Holy Ghoft, ever one God,

<sup>&#</sup>x27;world without end. Amen.'

# SERMON XXIII.

#### AcTs xvi. 30. 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

AVING considered Christ in his resurrection from the dead, we are next to follow him to his ascension into beaven.

By heaven here is to be understood both a place and a state. A place it must needs be; for the body of our Lord was taken away from this earth. While he blessed his disciples, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven; from earth to heaven, from the place where he then was, to that where he now is; to a place far above the heavens, above the region of the clouds, which is the first heaven, to that which is called the heaven of heavens, wherever it be, the most glorious place of God's manifestation of himself to his creatures. And as a place, so a state. A state of the highest glory and blessed ness: for We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour.

That he ascended into heaven we have the most assured testimony. For the Holy Ghost witnesses, that While they beheld he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. He did not vanish as an apparition, but while they were looking upon him, he was taken up; a cloud, namely, the Shechinah, or glory of the Lord, the visible symbol of divine presence, covering him about, and carrying him up leisurely into heaven, so that they might see him going up, till he and it were gone beyond the reach of their sight. Nor is there only the testimony of the disciples to this truth: for while they looked sted-

fledfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner, as ye have seen him go into heaven. If there be still farther need of witness, the truth of his ascension is manifest from his sending the Holy Ghost. Upon this ground he himself places the necessity of his going to heaven; If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And soon after his departure the Comforter did come unto them; than which there cannot be a more evident proof that he was indeed ascended to heaven unto the Father.

But however true the fact be, yet this is not all the professor has in view, but he means to declare his belief also of the force, import, and influence of such truth, when he

fays, He ascended into heaven. For,

He would be meant to understand and declare, that Jesus ascended into heaven in a public character, as the representative and head of his members. He believes they are no less ascended into heaven with him, than risen from the dead in him. His actions, he knows, are all public, for otherwise he sees not why the Son of God should come into the world.

And therefore,

First, When he fays, He ascended into heaven, it is as if he faid, I profess my belief that thereby he opened the gate of everlasting life for his people. He went away into heaven, into the more immediate presence of God. Sin had shut us out from an earthly paradife; Jesus takes possession of an heavenly one for us I go to prepare a place for you; not for myfelf only, but for you also. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. True it is, that your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your fins have hid his face from Ye are not now in that presence where is fulness of joy, nor admitted to be at his right hand, where there are pleasures for evermore. But I have made the atonement, your fins are blotted out; and behold, I ascend, in the merit of what I have done for you, and in your name and behalf, unto my Father, and therefore now your Father, and unto my God and your God. And I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go away, I will come again, and take you unto myself; that where I am, there we may be also. Thus he spake while on earth, and I see him verifying his

his word, when he went away into heaven. The gates lift up their heads, the everlasting doors were lift up, and the King of glory, the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle, came in. He came in, he fet the doors of heaven wide open, he gave us boldness and liberty to enter into the holiest, by the new and living way which he hath confecrated for us. When I ask myself, where is Jesus? And answer, He is passed into the heavens, I fee my nature exalted to the very place and state where I could wish it to be; heaven taken possession of, mortality swallowed up of life, the last hand put to the work of redemption, and that nothing new remains for the exalted Jesus to do, but to make his people partakers of all his victories and triumphs; in short, I see, in the ascension of the head, the full and glorious afcent of the members, according to the prophecy relative to him, and to them in him: 'The breaker is come up before them; they have broken up, and have passed through the gates, and are gone out by it; and their king shall pass before them, and the Lord at the head of them.'

But, Secondly, While I thus profess my belief of Christ's ascent into heaven in a public character, to open a way thither for his people, and to prepare a place for them, I do farther understand, that in so doing, he led captivity captive. By his ascension, he evidently triumphed over all our enemies that before had dominion over us, and most plainly led them as vanquished foes, behind the chariot in which he went up to his glory. By this glorious act he fully explained his victory. It is no longer in any measure uncertain whether the curse of the law be satisfied, death be destroyed, Satan be vanquished, hell be disappointed; for our furety, that undertook for us to deliver us from the hands of all these formidable adversaries, into subjection unto whom fin had brought us, has manifestly prevailed. Most unquestionably he satisfied the curse of the law, and thereby wrested their arms out of the hands of death, Satan, and hell: for instead of lying under the curse of the law, and therefore in the state of death, within the dominions of him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and referved in that state unto the blackness of darkness for ever, which must have been his case, had he not answered the demands which the law had against him as our substitute; I see him, in despite of death, the devil, and hell, going up into heaven. In defiance of death he lives, in defiance of the powers

powers of the air, he passed through, in designce of hell he went up into heaven. Yea, when he ascended up on high, he proclaimed his victories over them all, and made them all a spectacle to angels and to men. Nor is this all. I understand,

Thirdly, That by ascending up on high, he received gifts for men. He not only went up to prepare a place for us, but also to open an intercourse between heaven and earth, by receiving gifts necessary to prepare us for heaven, and to bring us thither. These he went up to receive. His presence was neceffary to his receiving them; if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you. He went up to receive the Spirit in his own person, in all fulness for men, that he might give unto them. To receive gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious, he ascended into heaven, that the Lord God might dwell among them. Sin had stopt the course of divine communications, the Spirit had been grieved, and was withdrawn; the iffue was, the world lay in wickedness, and darkness covered the earth. The Son of God will restore the fellowship. He becomes man. and takes away fin by the facrifice of himfelf. He carries that manhood into heaven. In it he receives the fulness of the Spirit, the condition of receiving which he had fulfilled on the cross. Out of it he gives. And thus the communication is opened, the Lord God dwells among us again. This we owe to his ascension. He went up to receive; and he received to give. Had he not received and given, what had I been this day? My eyes had been still blinded by the god of this world. I had not known God; I had lived without him in the world. He gave prophets, apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, and furnished them for their work. To these gifts I owe it, that I am not still dead in trespasses and fins. He ascended up on high to receive the Spirit in his various gifts and graces for men, and to give thereof unto them. He has received, and he has given: yea, and he will give, for he will not forfake his people. If he ascended to receive gifts for men, he will not unfaithfully keep what he has received. but will fend the Comforter to abide with his church for ever.

Upon the whole, therefore, when I fay, He afcended into heaven, my meaning is, that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and Lord of all things, when he had come down from heaven,

No. 3. o being

being made man, fuffered death on the cross, and risen from the dead, did by an actual removal go up to heaven in his whole person, God and man; and by so doing, being the representative of believers, did prepare and take possession of a place for them there, both leading captive all their enemies, and also receiving for them the Holy Ghost to provide them with all needful gifts and graces, till he come and take them to himself.

But while I thus profess my belief of an exalted Redeemer, by no means could I think that I sincerely believed he was ascended for these purposes, unless I could find the influence of my belief upon my heart, and in my life. And therefore, in conformity with these glorious ends of Christ's ascension, I declare,

First, That it is my defire and endeavour to have my conversation in heaven, whither he is gone to prepare a place for his people. Thither in heart and mind would I afcend with him, and continually dwell, as a citizen of that bleffed place. would accustom myself to dwell upon the glory of heaven in my thoughts and meditations, till I found myself more in love with the fame, waiting and defiring to be diffolved, and to be with Christ. By faith I would acquaint myself with what the glorified faints have the full fight and enjoyment of, the glory of Jesus, and would behold, as I could, the glory which the Father hath given him. I would have my heart increasingly longing after, and fatisfied with the mansions of the city above, to which Jesus is gone, and where he continually is. I would not be content with a cold, unanimated, dry acknowledgement of my Saviour's being afcended up to his glory.-Nor, like the world of unbelievers, talk of an afcended Jesus, and a heavenly kingdom, while my heart, and prospects, and pursuits are fixed down to earth. Fond mistake! what? Ye fons and daughters of pleafure, whose defires day and night are carried out after company and entertainment, according to that peculiarity which you relish and delight in, will you perfuade yourselves that you believe Christ ascended into heaven to prepare a place for you? Can you really think you believe it, when that place has not the least defire of your hearts, when ye constantly forget it, and it does not prevail with you to take one step for the obtaining it? Will the worldling, who

is thinking within himself, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? This will I do. I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will fay to my foul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry: will this man imagine, or will his vain neighbour, that is labouring to build some Babel to get him a name, imagine with him, that they stedfastly believe Christ is ascended to take possession of a kingdom that cannot be moved, in heaven, for us poor mortal finners? I would have my heart fo fixed on the heavenly inheritance, as not only to be disengaged from the vain prospects of these children of the world, but that all things below should be indifferent to me: I would be in the temper of a man upon a defolate island, who was waiting for the vessel he saw at a distance, that was coming to convey him to a land of plenty and happiness, where he wishes to be.

Secondly, Did Jesus ascend into heaven, leading captivity captive? Did he make it evident that his atonement had fatisfied the curse of the law, by his going up from all the power of death, Satan, and hell? Believing this, it is my duty, and shall be my endeavour to rejoice over all these vanquished enemies. I would be faying to my accusing conscience, Knowest thou not that the demands of the law are satisfied? To death, where is thy dart? Shall I fear thee, whom Jefus has led vanquished, in his ascent from thy dominions into heaven? To Satan I would fay, in all his affaults, Where is thy power? Have not I feen thee bound in chains? Rage if thou wilt, thou canst not hurt me. And to hell I would say, Terrible as thou art in thine everlafting flames, thou canft not affright Thee also I have seen vanquished. I have nothing to fear from thee, if I prove faithful to my Lord. In the face of all these enemies I would stand resolved. Though I can bring my Redeemer little glory any other way, yet I would not dishonour him by unbelief, as if he had not led all these my enemies captive when he ascended up on high. I would be ftrong in faith, that I might advance in love, and difengaged from every flavish fear, might serve my master chearfully in all my conversation. Believing the triumphs of my Redeemer, I would be stedfast against the fear of these potent enemies; yet

careful that my belief in the exalted Jesus wrought in me love and desire, I would guard against presumption. Believing that Jesus is ascended to heaven, in heart and mind I would ascend with him, and be raised above the gnawings of despair, and preserve myself safe from the greater danger of security. Does it become one, whose surely is ascended into heaven, either to harbour earthly affections, or to fear vanquished enemies? The one and the other are a disgrace to the profession of a Christian. Grace enabling me, I will not stop in low attainments. I will stedsaftly look up into heaven after Jesus ascended thither, till I can say, Lord, my heart is with thee. And then I will boldly say to conscience, death, Satan, and

hell, I fear you not.

Lastly, Ascending up on high, did he receive gifts for men, to bestow them on his people? And was the design of them that God might dwell among us, through the knowledge and love of the truth? Then knowing what these gifts are, it is my defire, and shall be my endeavour to use them answerably to the purpose of their vouchfafement. The apostle has taught me to understand by these gifts a ministry furnished with the knowledge of the gospel, able to teach and disposed to do so: whoever is not thus prepared, is not provided by Christ for the ministry, does but invade the office by undertaking it, and can do nothing to the edification of the church. But fuch a qualified ministry is from the Lord. He gave gifts unto men. He gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the editying of the body of Christ .-Seeing therefore this ministry to be what my Lord has received and given, and feeing it is principally by means thereof that God dwells among us, through the knowledge and love of the truth hereby wrought in us, I think it my duty to reverence it as his gift, to attend upon it as his ordinance, and to endeavour that it may promote my edification. I will not turn my back upon it, as if I might profit as well or better without it; this were to think meanly of the gift of Christ.— I will not attend upon it in curiofity, lofing fight of the gift in the qualifications of the man, whatever they be. Neither will I lightly let flip what the Lord by this method teaches me, and thereby difgrace the ascension of Christ to receive

and give gifts unto men. I will keep in memory that ministers in themselves are but earthen vessels, that I may not think highly of the men; yet I will remember, that when they are duly qualified and disposed, they are Christ's gift, that I may not think meanly of their office. I will not glory in men, for all things are for the fake of the church; but will account them fervants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God .--My eye shall be upon them as the gift of Christ, and I will bear it in my remembrance, that by their ministrations it is God who has ordained that I should be instructed and edified: for he has instituted no other. I will pray my ascended Lord that he will blefs them with all increase of knowledge and grace, and that he will bestow such gifts on all the churches of the faints. I know what glorious things were done, when foon after his afcension Christ vouchsafed his gifts to the apostles and others. I know his hand is not shortened, and that the residue of the Spirit dwelleth in him; wherefore I will pray the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

You fee now the practical influence of Christ's afcension into heaven. The last circumstance of which very seasonably leads us to the folemn transaction of this Ember Week. We may judge of the regard we have for the gifts Christ received when he ascended up on high, by the importunity of our prayers, that he will richly qualify, and duly dispose those who are offering themselves to the work of the ministry.-Should we not have this upon our hearts, could we really defire that God might dwell among us? Should we forbear to pray the Lord of the harvest, would there be any ground of perfuasion that we believe either that Christ received such gifts or gives them unto men; or that we had the least concern for the edification of others, or even of ourselves? Faith is but a name, if it be not brought into practice. And if it be real, why should it not influence us in this respect as well as any other? Those of you who are unacquainted with true faith, will go away and forget, nor will Jefus hear any prayers from you on the present interesting occasion. Believers will hear, be reproved, and I trust quickened to pray that the Lord will even now speak the word, that great may be the number of evangelical preachers.

#### Lectures on the Church Catechism. 214 SERM. 23.

The Collect for the Ascension day will properly conclude this discourse.

Grant, we befeech thee, Almighty God, that like as we do believe the only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to

have ascended into the heavens; so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with him continually dwell,

who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one

6 God, world without end. Amen.'

### SERMON XXIV.

#### Acтs xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shall be saved.

HAVING confidered and improved our Lord's afcension into heaven, we proceed to his fession; Hesitteth on the

right hand of God the Father Almighty.

The title Almighty is ascribed to the Father in the first article of the Creed, as well as in the present. Here it intends the absolute power of God, whereby he doth all things, can do what he pleases, and is above all possibility of being hindered in the execution of his purposes. There it regarded his absolute dominion over all things as an universal and eternal Sovereign.

To be on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, or on the right hand of power, (fince God has not indeed hands) must regard the station unto which Christ is exalted, and express the singular honour and glory he is advanced unto as Mediator, the possession of universal dominion as Lord of all things in his mediatorial capacity, and his own most perfect

and inconceivable bleffedness.

And whereas he is faid to fit on the right hand of the Father, this has no reference to his bodily posture, for the first martyr saw him standing on the right hand of God, but may imply his perpetual life and settled unalterable continuance in his exalted state, or more properly the authoritative administration of that power unto which he is exalted, and whereof he is put in possession.

In this exalted station our professor now considers him, who

in the days of his fleth was the man of forrows and acquainted with grief; and having before declared his belief that Jefus had done all things while on earth, which either the glory of of God or the falvation of finners required of him in that flate of humiliation, is now, in the merit of what he had done here below, possessed of all power in heaven, and employing it all in the most effectual manner to the same glorious ends.

But particularly he intends to fay,

First, I believe Christ to be at the right hand of God, in the present and perpetual administration of his prophetical office. While he was upon earth, his word was with power, but the full power of that word was referred to his being made head over all things to his church. Then the partition wall being broken down which feparated between Jews and Gentiles, he would teach all nations. This he has done and doth. He began with the Jews at the feast of Pentecost, and would teach them the way of life in believing that he was the Christ, the Son of God. I hear the poor fisherman bpen his mouth, and fee the hearts of thousands bending before the testimony he gave, that Jefus, that very Jefus whom they had crucified, was made of God, Lord, and Christ; What? Was it the word or wildom of Peter that wrought thus powe fully upon the hearts of fo many hearers, bent with peculiar opposition against the truths which they received? () was this an effect arising in a way of mere pertuation and evidence, from the miracle of tongues which stared them in the face? Both words and works, alike powerful, they had repeatedly enjoyed under Christ's ministry without any such issue. What then was the cause? I see and own it. Jesus was now glorifie 1; therefore the Holy Ghost was given. I hat gift he had now received of the Father, and now he began to fined abroad the fame in a measure and manner never before known. He taught the hearts of his people, by fending to them the light, not of his word only, but of his holy Spirit. In the strength of this influence the word ran. Speedily the 'found of it went out as it were into all lands, and believers were every where added to the Lord.' The prince of this world was cast out of his dominion, which he had usurped, and was forced to yield up the hearts of his captives to the more mighty Jesus. Thus the great Prophet of the church taught with power as foon as he was exalted to the right hand of God. Nor from that time

to this day has he forgotten his office. In every age he has taught the hearts of his people. In this age he teaches all that ever come to know and love the truth I fee him doing it by multitudes. While his faithful messengers are declaring the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, he is with them, giving unto many hearts to understand them. He makes the word effectual, being present by the Spirit, though in person he be in heaven. Sleeping finners awake, they arise from the dead, he gives them life. Yes, they live, they are turned from their former evil works, they live a divine life, they 'thine as lights in the world, he leads them into all necessary truth, he makes their path as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.' They have no need of an earthly infallible interpreter of the word of God, for he himself inftructs them all therein, from the least even unto the greatest, in the use of his own institutions. I own him for my Prophet, I defire myself to call no man on earth master, and I would leave others to be taught by him alfo. I will read, hear, and meditate upon his word, which he has caused to be written for my instruction, and will pray and wait for his Spirit to guide me into all faving truth. I am told by the mouth of St John, that the people of God have received an unction from the holy One, who fits on the right hand of God, and dispenses his gifts and graces to the church; and I am farther informed, that 'I his anointing abideth in them, and teacheth them of all things, fo that they need not that any man teach them' the first principles of Christianity, much less step into the place of the Spirit, for their farther information in revealed truths. This unction I trust I have received, for furely from the heart I have been enabled to confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh; I confess him to be my Saviour, I confess him to be the Son of God, I confess him to have come in the flesh to die for the ungodly, I confess that herein is all my falvation. Having therefore this unction from him the holy One abiding in me, I shall hereby both know every spirit, whether it be of God, and in these evil days of man's wisdom, most easily be affured that he that denieth the Father as the Father, and the Son as the Son, is Antichrist, denying the Son to be the only-begotten of the Father, and having confequently no true knowledge of the Father, nor interest in him; and also keeping under its influence I shall be built up in my most holy faith, receiving

ceiving constant additions of life and grace, and being furnished with higher qualifications for the kingdom of glory, through the continual care and teaching of my great Prophet

who fits at the right hand of the throne.

Secondly, As I believe Christ to be on the right hand of God in the exercise of his prophetical, so also of his priestly office. In the merit of his atonement he is gone up into heaven, and ap. pears in the presence of God for us. He presents his crucified body there in the behalf of his people. No fooner was he fet down on the right hand of God, than he obtained their perfect reconciliation, and the gift of the Holy Ghost to bless them Wherefore, when I confider invfelf, as I am covered with innumerable transgressions, and altogether guilty before God, I look up and fee my crucified Lord prefenting his facrifice on the behalf of finners before the throne; I cry out, and fay, 'Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, vea rather that is rifen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.' When I am carried away by the force of temptation, and from the daily lamented corruption of my nature am furprifed into fin, and my heart is vexed within me, and there is no rest in my bones by reason of my transgression, then I humbly get me to my Lord, look up to heaven, and say to my soul, ' If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jefus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our fins.' When I would approach God, and my foul is ready to draw back from his presence, in the thought of his great majesty and holiness, and of my unworthiness, as if it were presumption in me to look up unto this holy Lord God; and when I am fensible how low, unbecoming, and full of fin, my very best addresses are, then I look to the right hand of the throne, and hear this encouraging account of my Lord's intercession, recorded in the book of Revelations, and grow confident that God will not cast out my prayer; ' And another angel came, and stood at the altar, having a golden cenfer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it up with the prayers of all faints, upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the faints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.' With all my fins and infirmities about me, threatened by the law, and condemned by my own conscience,

I nevertheless find in my foul a peace in believing, which alfo, especially under trials and afflictions, grows up to joy in the Holy Ghost. I remember the words of my Lord, ' If I go onot away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will fend him unto you; and acknowledge his effectual advocacy, while I find that ' we have not received the fpirit of bondage again to fear; but we have received the fpirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father.' While I find my heart inclined and stirred up to mourn over fin before God, to cry importunately for deliverance from the body of fin dwelling in me, to fue continuedly for mercy as for my life, and for grace to love God in my own foul, and to others that they may love him also; while I find my spirit thus in conformity with the word of God, I have a joyful testimony that Christ intercedeth at the right hand of God, yea that even for me he maketh intercession. What I experience in myself is the fruit and proof of his interceding even for me.— The Spirit thus given is the effect of his intercession, and the proof of my interest therein. In such case, 'the Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered.' 'And he that fearcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

All these benefits I see arising unto me through the intercession of Christ, whose obedience unto death was so infinitely pleasing to the Father, that he had only to will all these things for his people, and they are done; their perfons are accepted, their daily miscarriages pardoned, their prayers heard. their fouls comforted, their hearts quickened by the Holy Ghost, to a penitent, humble, and heavenly temper. Well might the apostle encourage us, in these views of Christ's session at the right hand of God; 'Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, eyet without fin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.' I remark and treasure up the encouraging

couraging words, 'Obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.' Can I want more? Yet mercy and grace are the fure fruits of Christ's intercession to all that believe. For thefe I am encouraged to come boldly. Even fo, Lord, I come to obtain this mercy, and find this needed grace, that I may hold fast my profession. In all my wants of either, it is my defire to look up to thee, feated on the right hand of the Majesty on high, in the character of Mediator, and therein of reprefentative of thy people I am indeed a guilty creature, and most unworthy in all I do; I am beset with enemies as well as fins; but thou livest for ever, making intercession for us, and through thy advocacy there is mercy to cover my fin, and grace to help my weakness. Blessed Lord, whatever way I turn my thoughts, ' thou makest me to hear of joy and glade ness.' Thou art exemplifying to thy people what thou prayedst for them while thou wast on earth; and we are sure that of all which thou didst speak in thy prayer for us, not one word shall fall to the ground, till thou hast fulfilled the defire of thy heart, which thou didft express in words from thy lips, more precious to my foul than thousands of gold and filver: Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.' But,

Thirdly, I believe Jefus to be on the right hand of God as a King also. In this sense I principally understand his session at God's right hand. There I acknowledge him as Lord of all. Such he was from eternity, by right of nature, as God; fuch he was by right of creation, inafmuch as all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made; and fuch he was by office, when he took up the mediatorial character; yet in that quality he was not invested with the administration of all power, but in consequence of his sacrifice; and therefore, though he shewed his dominion over men and things, as occasion offered in the days of his flesh, yet he was not folemnly inaugurated and feated in his kingdom till his afcent into heaven, when in confideration of his obedience unto death, 'God gave him a name, which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' There I fee him feated on his throne, not only in the power, but in the exercise of universal dominion. Lord faid unto my Lord, faid David in the word of prophetic faith, ht thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies the footstool. David's Lord, and yet his Son. What the Scribes could not comprehend, is my unspeakable joy. David's Son; therefore man like myself: and David's Lord, therefore the Son of God. To him God faid, 'Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.' The grant is large as my wishes, for all his enemies are mine, and all my enemies are his. He reigns to restrain the rage of men, the fury of Satan, the malignity of corruption. Till the opposition of men, Satan and fin shall cease, he shall fit on his throne. But is this all? Has the exalted Jefus no subjects? Or does he forget these in the administration of his government? No, for he is made H. ad over all things to his church, for their protection, fafety, and happiness. He reigns to receive all that make their submission, to confer upon them the free and full reconciliation, which he purchased with his blood. On earth he had power to forgive fins, and furely that power is not lessened fince he is exalted to the right hand of the throne of God. He reigns to govern his people, not with a rod of iron but with a gracious sceptre, which he has given them hearts to love, and unto which he is continually bringing them into a more willing and entire subjection. He reigns to protect them against all their enemies, and to make all things work together for their good. Thus he reigns a terror to his enemies, but what a bleffing to his friends! and thus he shall reign till all things be put under him; till upon the great day of his appearing, devils and finners shall be shut up in the eternal prison of hell; till saints shall be made perfect in holiness, raifed up immortal, incorruptible, and glorious; and sin and death, the last enemy, shall, in regard of them, be destroyed for ever. Then, 'When all things shall be put under him, he · shall render up the mediatorial kingdom unto the Father,' all the ends for which he received it being fully answered, and himself shall reign God-man for ever and ever, and his happy people with him.

All this I stedfastly believe concerning the kingdom in heaven of my exalted Lord, when I profess my faith in him as for ever fat down at the right hand of God. But then I would

be understood to say this with an application of his kingdom to myself, owning him to be my Lord, by submitting myself to his government, and leaning considently on his protection

against my every enemy, and all of them together.

First, I do hereby declare that I willingly submit myself to his divine government and direction. And when I fay this, my meaning is, that I defire without referve, to be conformed to his words, or written law, in spirit, soul, and body; so that I may not be of the number of those, who say unto him. Lord, Lord, but do not the things which he fays, difgracing his majesty, by pretending to be his servants: that to the end of my being made conformable to his will, I do defire to yield myself unto the guidance and discipline of his Spirit, in an entire dependence on his operations, in a regardful attention and submission to his facred motions, and in a reverential acquiescence under all his dispensations to my soul; whether it be fit that I shall walk in darkness, or in the light of God's countenance, as to his infinite wisdom, love, and goodness, shall seem fit: and finally, that for the purposes of his glory, and of my fanctification, I do defire to be subject to the direction of his providence, to have the cross laid upon me in manner, measure, and continuance, as he pleases; humbly and heartily befeeching him that, however heavy it may be, he will enable me to bear it, fo that I may not, by withdrawing from it when it presses hard and is heavy (which I am affured it will never be, without some singular occasion) defeat the grandest designs of his glory by me, and the most signal means of advantaging my foul. Not thus disposed, could I say with a good conscience, that I submit myself as a subject of his spiritual kingdom, to his direction and will? Could I call him Lord in fincerity of heart? Could he get any glory by me, or I any benefit from his kingdom; or can I once think he will own me for one of his, when he shall come in the clouds of heaven? But bleffed be God, even thus I defire to fubmit to his government, in a conformity with his will, fubmission to his grace, and acquiescence in his providence.-And.

Secondly, I declare farther, that in yielding myself thus to his government, I desire considently to depend upon the protection of the same. I would be always in the spirit of the apostle, and say continually, and in every case, I know whom

I have believed; and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.' defire that I may never dishonour him in my heart or conduct by mistrusting his power, as if any thing were too hard for him; or his care, as though he should be forgetful of me. Confident in his royal authority to pardon, I would never yield to the accusations of an evil conscience, while I was suing for his mercy. Confident in his fufficiency and love to strengthen my weakness, I would never stagger at the approach of a trial, or faint in the endurance of it, but boldly hold up my head, in the affurance that 'he will not fuffer me to be tempted above that I am able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that I may be able to bear it.' Confident in his power to fanctify me wholly, I would not finfully doubt, though my lusts should be like lions roaring against, and threatning to devour me; though they were never fo old and obstinate; though the time for their mortification were never fo short; though it were past all my comprehension how I could possibly be made perfect in holiness; while yet I was fensible that no unholy thing can enter heaven. Confident in his power to protect me against the arts of the devil, I would never decline my duty, from an apprehension that Satan will lie in wait to turn it into a fnare to my foul; and should the fiend at any time befet me with horrible fuggestions, and thrust into my mind black speeches, well befitting his hellish mouth, I would neither fear nor tremble, but in the name of my Lord boldly refift him, yea, and in this respect scorn and despise him. Consident in his power to receive my departing spirit to himself, though I know not the world of spirits, though I have never tried the invisible state, I would joyfully furrender it up, whenever it is his pleasure; and confident in his power to raife my body from the dust, I would chearfully at his call, lay down this tabernaele: in the hour of death I would not diffrust and diffrace my Lord's protection, but say to death, 'Welcome, thou last enemy! where, what is become of thy fling?' Finally, from this present moment till that hour come, I would not doubt or fear, though I should dwell among scorpions; though I should have to contend day by day with those that are set on fire by the rage and malice of their hearts, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword; though my habitation were with such as every ' day day wrested my words, all their thoughts being against me for evil, who should gather themselves together, and hide themselves, and mark my steps, while they waited for my foul. Though my trials from an evil world were without interruption, and of never so long continuance, so that I should grow up to grey hairs under them, yet still would I be consident in my Master's care, nor so much as once say with Da-

vid, I shall perish one day by the hand of Saul.

Thus confident I would always be in the protection of my King, who fitteth on the right hand of God. I would, but I too often do not. There is an evil heart of unbelief lurking within me. This, I have great cause to fear, will betray me. It must do so, when I forget who sits on the right hand of God, and why he fits in that glorious station. When the heavens are opened unto my faith, and I fee Jesus sitting on the right hand of God, then I can do all things. But, alas, how much too apt am I to lofe that quickening, strengthening fight, in the cares and engagements of the world! Then how ready to difgrace my Lord by finful mifgivings, and shameful compliances in the fear of present evil! Then every approaching trial staggers me; then I have no heart to hold out against corruptions; then the cunning and rage of Satan grow formidable; then death looks dreadful; then I tremble at the faces, the frowns, the reproaches of an evil world. This I know from experience, that if I walk not by faith, I have power for nothing; and therefore, while I thus declare my honest desires, my cry is, 'Lord, increase my faith.'

You see now somewhat of that which is contained in these words of our Creed, He sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. You see, I am persuaded, that a real belief of his doing so, implies a certain spirituality of temper, to which I could most earnestly wish none here present were strangers. But, sirs, what correspondence have you in your souls with this exalted Prophet, Advocate, and King? I may be free to ask you such a question, because ye are come here under the name of his people. Yet I would much rather ye would ask yourselves what passes in your own hearts, between you and him that sitteth on the right hand of God: whether any thing of what you have heard be a matter of your experience; whether in this manner ye believe he is alive in heaven; whether ye have any practical regard to him there, as teaching, inter-

ceding for, governing and protecting his church; whether your hearts go up to him with that frequency and fervency which may reasonably persuade you that you really believe in him as fat down at the right hand of God for these purposes. I fay, it would be very reasonable you should make such inquiry, whether this faith be in you or not? But fince I fear many of you will not bestow on your souls so much as the pains of this inquiry, I will ask this very plain question,-When did you last think where Christ was, whether in heaven or on earth? Have you thought of his being on the right hand of God this day, or yesterday, or the day before, or the week past, or the last Lord's day, or when? What say you in anfwer? Ah, I know what your heart is faying, 'Truly I canonot tell when I thought about it, it is the least in my thoughts.' And if so, I need not add what your conscience is faying farther, 'That you have all to begin for your foul.' Well, I wish then I could see you make a beginning you now go home, and confider what a cafe you are in, and fet yourself to call on God for his grace to shew you the full truth of your condition? No, I fear, from what I have hitherto feen, you will not. The devil will not fuffer you. There will be company or bufiness in the way. Satan will hinder you by fome means or other. Ah! firs, how do we trifle with our fouls! were we to deal thus with our estates, we should be deemed fools or madmen. Lord, awaken us out of our fleep, that we perish not.

# SERMON XXV.

Acts xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

WE left our professor comforting himself in the belief of his Saviour's sitting on the right hand of God; and are now to consider him as he rejoices in the expectation of Christ's coming the second time to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe that he, who died for our fins, is gone away into heaven to prepare a place for his people; from thence I am expecting him to come again with power and great glory, to receive them unto himself, that they may be with him where he is: and in the mean time, I fee him fitting on the right hand of God to prepare for them the place which he has prepared for them; by teaching them from thence, and leading them into all truth, as their exalted Prophet; by fending down upon them the comforting Spirit, as their great High Priest and Intercessor, in the power of which Spirit they come unto God with boldness by him, and ask every thing of him as their Father; and by both fanctifying their hearts by his grace, through the co-operation of his providence, into a growing conformity with that holiness, the measure of which is revealed in the scriptures; and also defending, protecting, and supporting them from, and against their enemies; and caufing every instance of opposition raised against them to work for their good, as their 'fovereign Lord and King.' Confident in his power, care, and love to keep my foul against that day of his coming, I look forward to it with expectation,

and

and express my faith and hope, saying, From thence he

fhall come to judge the quick and the dead.'

What the dead are, every one knows; even all that ever have died, or shall die, from the first to the last day. Yet whenever the Lord comes, there will be a generation covering the face of the earth, as it is now. These are the quick or the living here intended, who shall not die, but be changed, and together with the dead, appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

Nothing is more plainly described in scripture, than that there shall be a judgment, before which all men shall appear. Nor is the person, who shall sit in the judgment seat, less explicitly assured to be Jesus Christ. But in what fort this coming of Christ to judgment stands here as an article of Christian faith, and what the person making profession of his Christian faith intends hereby, come now to be distinctly explained.—

His meaning is,

First, I do hereby declare my stedfast belief, that Jesus Christ, who was once crucified, but now liveth at the right hand of God, and no other but he, shall come to judge the quick and the dead. Taught by the scriptures of God I believe this. Without them I might have indeed have supposed, (God having kept up through the world fuch an opinion) that there would be a judgment hereafter, wherein all the diforders fubfifting in this world, fo evidently lying in wickedness, should be rectified; the mysterious ways of Providence cleared up and vindicated; the glory of God's government afferted and maintained; and every man be treated in a manner fuited to his real character and conduct. But that this work, so manifeftly above the reach of any creature, because only capable of being transacted by omniscience and omnipotence, should be effected by one in our nature, I could not in the least meafure have suspected, unless the scriptures of God had revealed it unto me. Yet now that God has made it known, that he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man authom he bath ordained, and hath given affurance thereof unto all men, in that he hath raifed him from the dead, I fee hereby an honour put upon my once despised Matter, wherein I greatly rejoice; perceive with unspeakable comfort that my judgment shall be according to the gracious terms of his gospel; and am perfectly satisfied that he who loved me unto the death, will deal with me

in a corresponding tenderness, not disowning my poor services, because they have been unworthy of him; and passing by my lamented impersections and sins. Wherefore being apprised, from the very person of the Judge, of the nature of

the judgment, I do,

Secondly, Make this my profession of his coming to judge the quick and the dead with confidence therein. Was there not a Mediator between God and man; was I to be judged absolutely according to my works, nothing could be expected but condemnation and destruction; for in that case no slesh living could be justified, all having finned, and come short of the glory of God, and therefore must expect that he would glorify himself in the universal punishment of us all. But God in this judgeth no man who believeth in Jesus, but hath committed all judgment to the Son, and that for this reason, because, having assumed the mediatorial character, though he is God, yet he is also the Son of man. Knowing therefore the person of my Judge, I am affured of the measure of my judgment, that it shall be such as I have confidence I shall be able to answer. My fins will not be my destruction, because my Judge once died for the ungodly; and in the fense of my ungodliness and misery, I have, upon his invitation, betaken myself to him, who tells me now, with his own mouth, That he that cometh unto him he will in no wife cast out; and I have no suspicion that he will not make good at last, what he now so graciously declares. I have nothing to fear from my manifold fins, being under his protection, and partaking of the benefits of his blood which cleanfeth from all fins, provided I shall be able to make it appear, that this my faith has been alive, and fruitful of good works. My works must appear to justify my faith: in the want of them I should be found to have no faith in me.-But I have works to shew; and these such as I know beforehand he will own, because he has told me so already in his holy word I have been made to understand, that nothing availeth now, or will be made any account of in the day of the Lord, but fai h which worketh by love, by real love to him, and to his people for his take. Now with all my unbelief, pride, covetousness, shame, cowardice, and every accursed lust that wars in my members, I have certainly works of love to produce towards him and his people. When he shall ask me, Haft thou loved me?' I shall be able to answer, Lord, thou

4 knowest all things, thou knowest thou didst in my days upon earth reveal thyself to my fin-burdened foul, and cause me to behold thy glory, as the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and thereby win my foul to thee, and work in me by thy power to make me love thee; thou knowest that I loved Yea, Lord, thou knowest, how thou didst over-6 come all my prejudices against thee, till I saw thee the fairest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. I am ashamed to fpeak of any testimonies of my love, but they were thy work, 6 defiled and defaced as it was in every instance by my abominable corruption and finfulness; and therefore to thy praise I will make mention, how thou didst possess me with a zeal for thy name, and enable me to confess it before men; in defiance of my own native cowardice to own myfelf in the midst of reproach to be thy fervant, and to follow thy words. instead of the custom of the world, as the rule of my actions. Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee, though alas, with an unequal love; and thy interests, but with too cold a heart. I did not yield myself, from the day that I knew thee, to the fervice of fin and fatan, but pro-· fessed myself to be, and in some imperfect measure made that profession good through thy grace, thy servant, even thine only. And fince thou requireft a yet farther and peculiar testimony of my having loved thee, by demanding of • me the proofs of my having loved thy yeople, those that professed thy name, and followed thy steps, for thy sake; be-4 hold, Lord, didst thou not give me an heart to delight in thefe thy faints, here upon thy right hand, while they were upon earth? Thy love towards me constrained me to love them. Surely I could not forbear giving a cup of water to any of them, as bearing the name, and manifesting the character of thy disciples. Thou hadst said to Peter, If thou · lovest me, feed my sheep; and hast declared before, that what offices of love were done to any of thy brethren, as thou 6 didst condescend to call them, thou wouldst regard them as 6 done to thyself; yea, thou hast said, that whosoever received one of thy children in thy name, received thee. Now, Lord, all these things didst thou enable me to do, in some 4 imperfect measure. I received, and owned thy children for thy sake, while, because of their faithfulness to thee, the sworld was casting out their name as evil. Some little offices P 3

of love I tendered them. I fed them, or gave them drink, " or clothed them, or took them into my house, or visited "them if they were fick or in prison.' Neither was I utterly wanting to minister to their bodies in other respects, or to their fouls, according to my gifts or abilities. It was upon 'my heart not to offend them, and I was not utterly without regard to my conduct, that it should not be unto them an occasion of falling. But, righteous Judge, I do not stand before thee in the merit of any of these things. I dare not, in any fuch view, speak of my love to thee or thy people. I see it unsuitable, low, worthless, nothing. Now it was plain-Iy to have been all thy work, whatever of it there was, but to have been hindered, weakened, debased by my exceed. ing felfishness; and I am astonished at thy miraculous power, that any thing like love should ever have subsisted in my depraved heart, or appeared in my conduct. Lo, in the merit of thy blood and righteousness I stand here before thee. This is all my falvation this day. I will mention no other. But fince thou wilt; and hast respect in mercy to my poor fervices, behold I render back all the glory of them to thee, who didlt work them in me; and as for myfelf, I will fland for ever before thee with this one acknowledgment upon my heart and tongue, Sinful and unprofitable, I stand here faved by grace.' Having therefore boldness to appeal thus to the Judge of all the earth, knowing that my Judge is my Saviour, under whose healing wings I have taken refuge from the avenging arm of justice; knowing that my judgment will pass according to the works of faith, and not of the law, and having the testimony of my conscience that Christ dwelleth in me by the spirit of love which he hath given me, I have boldness in the expectation of his coming, and do say, with confidence of my interest therein, The Lord is at hand to judge the quick and the dead. - Wherefore,

Thirdly, Having this confidence in respect of judgment, I mean to express also my hope, expectation, and waiting defire of that day. I regard it as the day of my Lord's eminent triumph, when he shall come in the glory of the Father, with great power and unequalled majesty, attended by the hosts of heaven, and all nature bowing before him; when by the working of his mighty power the dead shall arise from the various distributions of their dust. And with the assembled liv-

ing, stand, a vast multitude which no man can number, before his feat, to own and honour, whether willingly or not, the once despised Lamb; when the fallen angels too shall be brought up to adorn his appearance, and receive their final doom from his mouth; when he shall be admired in all them that believe, because of the adorable work he shall have wrought for them and in them, and upon fuch as would not obey his gospel, he shall get himself glory infinitely surpassing that when he destroyed so many of his haughty enemies in the depths of the Red Sea; when every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him shall own, that he is no other than the once crucified Jesus; when by his royal word he shall pronounce the fentences never to be recalled; by his omnipotency shut up the damned in the caverns of hell for a miferable eternity; and bid a new heaven and a new earth to come forth, furnished and provided with every circumstance of greatness, glory, and beauty, to receive for ever his happy faints. Can I think of this day, so honourable to him whom my foul loveth, without longing and wishing for its appearance? And when I confider that his people shall partake with him in the glories of that day, hearing his voice, shall come forth victorious over death the last enemy, decked in all the brightness, strength, and glory of a spiritual body, with their own eyes behold their Lord avenging himself upon his enemies and theirs, by an utter destruction; and hear him say to them those ravishing words, never to be recalled, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father:' can I do other than say, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!' Surely I would rejoice to see, and be for ever with the Lord; to behold all his beauty, as the express image of the Father's person; to contemplate with endless and insatiable transport the glory which the Father has given him; to make my acknowledgement in the praises of heaven, among the multitude which no man can number, as faved, for ever faved by his love and care, his power and grace. What? when the least beam of his glory, now let in upon my foul, turns my earth into heaven, and makes me cry out with Peter, It is good for us to be here, can I wish him to delay his coming? When, remaining in the vail of misery I groan under corruption, and am burdened with a corruptible body, can I say, This is better than to be fashioned in a foul and body like unto the Lord? When I find here nothing P 4

but vanity, and vexation of spirit, shall I be averse to the Lord's coming, to change my forrows into joy unspeakable and full of glory? Here, befet as I am with enemies, would I not long for that bleffed day when I shall see them again no more for ever? And would I not be glad to be taken from a world lying in wickedness, into the new heavens and earth, wherein dwelleth righteoufnels? I know that my Redeemer liveth, I know that he shall stand on the latter day on the earth; I have humble confidence that he will own me among the children; and shall I, like those who know no better joys than this world can afford them, are ignorant of a Redeemer's righteoufness, and lie under the conscious guilt of unnumbered and unpardoned fins; shall I like them, cleave to this base life as my all for happiness, and not wait, and wish, and long for the day of my Master's glorious appearance? No, I will not abide in that low measure of faith, which only begets a hope, that it may be well when the Lord comes, but knows' not what it is ' to love the day of his appearance.' My endeavour shall be to be 'sfrong in faith, and abounding in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost; always fruitful in good works and haftening unto the day of the Lord.' Hold out, faith; and come, Lord Jefus. Yet,

Fourthly, When I declare my belief, confidence, and hope concerning the coming of Christ, I do therewith also express my purpose and determination to be daily making preparations for his coming. All my belief, confidence, and hope, regarding that day, I must needs look upon as delusion, unless the expectation thereof makes me both diligent and perfevering in the work of the Lord. For affuredly I could neither believe, nor defire, nor have any interest in the day of the Lord, if the coming of that day did not in fuch manner abide upon my heart, as to engage me unto a continual preparation for it. But I know that the day of the Lord cometh, yea, that it cometh as a thief in the night, and therefore it is my defire to be always prepared, that whenever it cometh I may be found fo doing, as that my work may be ready. Like the foolish virgins, I would not go out to meet the bridegroom, not having oil in my lamp, neither with those that were wise would I flumber and sleep, or fuffer my lamp to burn dimly, and to need trimming, when the cry of the bridegroom's coming should reach me. It is my desire and purpose to live al-

ways as if I heard that folemn voice founding continually in my ears, 'Awake, ye dead, and come to judgment;' and in this view, not barely to abstain from such things as would bring me to confusion of face before the judgment-seat of Christ, but as much as possible even from all such thoughts, cares, and studies, as would make me forgetful of the day of the Lord. On the contrary, I would be daily laying up treafures for that day. Every day I would be fo meditating upon, and have fixed on my heart the day of judgment, that my faith therein should be more lively, and my hope of it more ardent, and this my faith and hope kindle my love of Jefus and of his people into a brighter flame, to the confuming more and more all felfish, fenfual, and earthly ends and mixtures; and to the producing fuch works of love to him and them, as will be to the increase of praise and glory on that day. I would not have one day or hour go by, wherein the coming of the Lord should be forgotten; nor one thing be brought forth that would not graciously be remembered when I shall stand before the judgment feat of Christ. Every day and hour I would be doing fomething for judgment, whether by endeavouring after an inward increase of that faith which worketh by love, or by attempting something outwardly for the honour and interests of my Master, for the salvation and prefent happiness of others, for his sake. Wherever I had been, and whatever I had done, I would be able, on reflection, to trace the footsteps of this expectation to have been in my conduct; and as I grew nearer to that day, I would have this expectation to become more strong, fruitful, and visible, in my every action. I would not grow weary nor faint, but endure unto the end in such works as are prepared for me to walk in, hastening still onward to the day of the Lord. To this work I would encourage myself by repeated meditations on the glory of that illustrious day, and perpetually would I ask myself, Am I ready? Will this and this, O my foul, retard or promote thy readiness? Will this or this bring thee joy or shame at Chrift's coming? Thus would I exercise myself in the belief and expectation of the day of the Lord; thus would I do, and be found doing, when my fummons is brought me by death to appear before the Judge of quick and dead; and in the confidence of my Redeemer's merit, and of my interest therein,

therein, I would fay to death, 'Welcome,' and to the day of

Christ, 'Come quickly.'

What has been now fet before you, is the plain unquestionable meaning of the point under confideration. What shall we think therefore if while we own with our mouths that Christ shall come from the right hand of God, to judge the quick and the dead, we have neither confidence in, nor hope of that day, and have not made, nor are making any preparation for that? In fuch case shall we say, or can we think we have faith in this article? And O how much less may this be faid, if we know in our confciences, that we are absolutely unprepared for that awful day, and fo, instead of having any confidence therein, are satisfied it would be our destruction, should it find us as we are, and therefore tremble at the thought of its coming? Alas, alas, my dear friends, how shall many of us appear before the judgment seat of Christ? For what have we to appear in? Where is our faith in Jefus Christ? What fellowship is there between him and our souls? Where are the works of faith, love to him, and to his people? Have we none of these to shew? No owning of Christ, no following his words, no renouncing the ways of men for his fake, no love of his people, no giving fo much as a cup of water to any because they are his? What, in no kind, in no degree fuch works as he will own? And yet shall we receive according to our works? But what can we think of it then, if instead of owning Christ, we have been opposing him; instead of loving his people, we have been hating them for being fo; instead of having any good works to shew for ourfelves, Christ will find an endless number of evil works to shew against us? What can we think of it, if nothing shall appear to have been done by us but what is evil continually; ceaseless, numberless works of darkness, in thought, word, or deed, as many as the days, hours, and minutes of our lives have been? What, my dear friends, will any one of us be hardy enough to appear under these circumstances before Christ's judgment feat, where nothing can be hid, and all will be laid open? Yet remember, there we must all come, whether we will or no. God will have it fo, and who can prevent it? To be plain, I am grieved at heart for many, ve-Ty many of you, to think how you will make your appearance before Christ's judgment seat. You have no works to speak there

there for your belonging to Christ; I can see none. I see works of various kinds that prove you do not belong to him. If a life of pleasure, idleness, company-keeping, indulgence, drunkenness, pride, covetousness, would recommend you to the favour of the Judge, few would be better received than numbers of you. In the name of God, my friends, when you know this moment in your own consciences, that if, as if you have been and are, you should be called to judgment, you would be as furely cast into hell, as if you were already scorching in those dreadful flames, why will you live at such a rate? Well, we shall be all before the judgment seat of Christ together. There the controverfy between me, perfuading you by the terrors of the Lord, and you, determined to abide in your fins, will be decided. There it will appear whether your blood will be upon your own heads, for your obstinate impenitency, or upon mine, for not giving you warning. Christ will certainly either acquit or condemn me on this account; and if I should be acquitted herein, what will become of you? I tremble to think how fo many words of mine will be brought up against you on that day. What will you say, what will you answer, how will you excuse yourselves? O firs, if you will not be prevailed upon, you will with eternal felf-reproach curse the day that you knew me, or heard one word from my mouth. Why, why will you die with fo aggravated a deftruction? O think of the judgment; think of it, and you will not be able to hold it out against your own fouls. May the Lord incline you to do fo; may he cause his word to fink deep into your hearts; may he shew you all your danger; and with an outstretched arm bring you out of the hands of the devil, and translate you into the glorious kingdom of his dear Son, to his own glory, and your unspeakable happiness in the day of the appearance of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Even so, most mighty God, and most merciful Father, for the fame Iesus Christ. Amen.

# SERMON XXVI.

#### GALATIANS, iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

THE main purpose of this Epistle is to shew that justification is not by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ. In handling this point, he answers divers objections made to his doctrine. And, among others, (verse 19th of this chapter) 'If the inheritance be of promise, wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come, to whom the 'promise was made.' It was given because of sin, to make it known, and fo, by shewing the want of a Saviour, to dispose the hearts of those who were under the law for receiving that Saviour, whenever he should make his appearance. he explains more fully afterwards in the text, calling the law our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ; by the law he means the whole law of Moses, moral, ceremonial, and judicial; and he infifts, that the great defign of the whole Nofaic dispensation, was to bring us to (hrist, that we might be justified by faith. Now those parts of this dispensation which were ceremonial having had their end, are ceased, they were the shadows of good things to come, that is, of Chr ft, who was ever the substance of them all, and whenever the lews are called in, these ceremonies will not be restored; for since the appearance of Christ, they have no more use, as is fully argued in the Epistle to the Hebrews; and accordingly from the establishment of his spiritual kingdom, and destruction of the Jewish polity, they are entirely laid aside by divine authority,

however they have been, and are the great occasion of stum-

bling to the lews.

But then, with regard to that part of the law which is moral, it still remaineth, because the need and the use of it are the same. It serves now, as it did always, to give knowledge of sin, and so by humbling us to bring us unto Christ for justification. through his merits; and, in consequence thereof, for power from him dwelling in us, to sulfil in truth, though not in perfection, that righteousness which the holy, just, and

good law of God enjoins and exacts from us.

It is in this latter fenfe I shall take the words, inasmuch as we have no concern with the ceremonial parts of the law; and I will endeavour to shew you how the commandments of God, when applied to the conscience, serve as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, by discovering to us our sinfulness; inasmuch as the commandments of God exact of us a holinefs, which (however God the holy Governor of the world can require no less) yet is such as we have not, do not, and cannot perform; therefore must be beholden for mercy through the obedience of him, who alone has fulfilled the righteousness of the law, and was made a facrifice for us. It is in this manner we are taught by the church to which we belong, to apply the law, when after hearing every one of the commandments. a petition for pardon is put into our mouths, Lord, have mercy upon us; and that we may obtain a deeper sense of our needing mercy, as transgressors of God's law, I shall now enter on a consideration of the commandments one after another in this view.

And this, I conceive, will be a fuitable employment for these Sundays in Lent: for which reason, I purpose to go no farther with them than this season will allow me. If God spare my life, and continue me among you, I may possibly resume, and complete this design another year.

We are to begin with the first commandment .- Thou shalt

have none other gods but me, or before me.

And here I will shew, what it is this commandment enjoins, adding and intermixing such inquiries and remarks, as may, by the divine bleffing, serve to humble and bring us to Christ.

The first four commandments require us to worship God, with the inward worship of the heart, and the outward worship

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ship of the life; which last is really nothing but formality, if the heart be not given up to worship God, as this first of all

the commandments requires it should be.

In general, then, this commandment requires we should know God. Know him we cannot truly and fully as he is, For can't thou by fearthing find out God? Can't thou find out the Almighty to perfection?\* Nor can we know any thing of his spiritual nature and perfections, unless he reveal himself to us. But this he hath done in his word, and from thence we may learn to differn him in his works and ways. The fcripture gives us an account of the one God existing in a Trinity of persons; that he is a living Spirit, having life in himself, and not from another; that his life is unchangeable and eternal, ever living and ever the fame; that he lives every where; that to this ever living Spirit belongs almighty power and unerring wifdom; that he is holy altogether, being incapable of willing any thing but what is perfectly right: that this living Spirit is the maker of the world, in which are manifest his boundless power and matchless wisdom; that he continues the world and every thing in it in being, himself upholding all things by his power; and maintaining every thing in the state it is in by his presence; that he rules every thing according to the purposes of his holy and upright will, making every thing, even the most jarring oppositions of men and devils, serve his wife and holy ends; that he governs us by a Redeemer, in whom, to display his own glory, are evident the unchangeableness of his holiness, the riches of his goodness, and the abundance of his wisdom and might; finally, that this living God will be eternally the same, his purposes shall never change, his doings fulfilling without ceasing the counsels of his will from all eternity.

Now fince this knowledge of God, as he hath revealed himfelf, is the foundation of all true spiritual worship, or giving the heart to him, I propose to your inquiry, and as the ground of deep humiliation, Whether you have been using all diligence in seeking to know God? He hath fully revealed himfelf in his word for the purpose, and that word he hath ordered to be ministered unto you; you have not wanted means and opportunities: but will you say, That you have improved them as you ought? Have you not been careless in the

matter? Not given your mind to know God? Have you not difliked to have God in your knowledge? Or been drawn afide from feeking to know him by the various things of life? Or hearkening to the finful dulness of the flesh, not bestirring yourfelf to hear and fearch the scriptures, with continual prayer, that you might be directed into the knowledge of God? To this enquiry after your diligence, let me add, Have you experienced humility in fearthing after God? Have you come always to hear and read the word with a meek and tractable fpirit, defirous only to be taught; ready to believe whatever God should fay to you? Have you never read the word, or heard it curiously, with a desire to pry into God's secrets; proudly, merely to inform your head, and make you wifer than others; arrogantly, ready to dispute what you could not comprehend? Have you never questioned the certainty of any of God's declarations, or disputed in your heart the justice of his determinations, or found yourfelf wishing that God were even fuch an one as yourfelf, that you may find his word corresponding with your vain and carnal fancies and humours? Let me ask, Whether you be not this day, as to any thing that deserves the name of knowledge, very ignorant of God? You may have got a speculative knowledge of God; so had Eli's fons; for it cannot be supposed they were destitute of all knowledge of God, and yet it is faid of them, 'They were ' fons of Belial, they knew not the Lord;' that is, whatever they knew of him, it had no good effect upon them, they did not regard him as God in their hearts, were unmindful of, and forgot him. And may not this be faid of you in one degree or another? Whatever you may know of God, do not you, many of you, live without him in the world ! your hearts as regardless and unconcerned about him, as if you had never heard of him. Do not you contrive fomehow or other, to forget him day after day, yea, do not whole days pass over your heads, wherein you do not so much as think of him? I will venture to ask, Whether there be not some of you, who have not really thought of him even now, fince you have been here in his house? And all of us, are we not reproachfully ignorant and blind to the knowledge of God, in comparison of what we ought to be? How little do we fee of his wisdom, power, and goodness, in his works and ways? How forgetful often of his presence? How inobservant of his providences?

How regardless of his judgments, mercies, calls, and warnings, fo constantly besetting us? Let me inquire again, whether your knowledge of God has been fuch, as to abase you as it ought in your own fight? Alas! that ever man should be proud! such a thing, yea, such a nothing, yea, such a worse than nothing; fuch a crawling worm, fuch a finner, fuch a criminal, such a child of hell! O that ever the reason of man should be debased to such a degree of ignorance, as that man should be proud! yet proud we are all by nature, setting ourfelves up above all that is called God, faying to him, Depart from us, what, or who is God? Look back and fee, what you have reckoned yourselves; look in and see, what your wretched hearts would needs have you conceit that you are! O my brethren, have our hearts learnt the infinite difference there is between God and us? His excellency and our baseness, his power and our weakness, his mercy and our misery, his rich grace and our spiritual poverty; have not our hearts yet much to learn of this lesson? Do we yet so know God as to know ourselves? O when shall it be that we shall be lowly in our own eyes, as becomes the creatures of the high God, the finners against the most glorious Sovereign of the universe, the poor, miserable, helpless, perishing wretches we are, faved only by infinite mercy and almighty grace?

And now after this inquiry, shall I need ask, are you guilty or free in this matter? The duty of the knowledge of God, doth it condemn or acquit you? I need not wait for an anfwer, I am perfuaded every mouth is stopt; not one dare fay, Lord God, I have known thee, I have fought after thee, I do know thee as I ought to do.' If your mouth open, it can only be in that cry which alone becomes fallen man,-God be merciful to me a finner.' Brethren, I suppose you may have often wondered, when you have heard me making fo little account of your best performances, that I would not allow there was any thing in them which could in the least deferve God's notice; that I have been fo constantly calling on you to put off your rags, and clothe yourselves with Christ's righteousness. Now what think ye of the matter yourselves? There is not a foul among you who is not miferably condemned in the very outlet; not one of you that knows God as he ought to know him, and as God requires we should know him. And if the fountain be thus impure, can the waters iffuing

fuing from it be clean? A true knowledge of God is the whole of religion; as much as this is defective, all the rest must be so of course; and if we have sinned here, we cannot be innocent anywhere else. This will be more evident in the more particular consideration of this practical knowledge of God, which will be illustrated in all the commandments.

But for the present, I am to confine myself to the first, and to shew you more distinctly the things that are included in the practical knowledge of God in the heart, which this commandment requires of us. And they are these three, to put the whole trust in him, to love him with all the heart, and to fear him only. You will easily observe, that were there in our hearts fuch a knowledge of God as the scripture revelation proposes to us; were our hearts duly sensible that the living, eternal, almighty, wife, holy, merciful God, was ever prefent with us, we could not but trust in him always, and in every case without fear; esteem, defire, and delight in him with all our fouls, ready always to pleafe him, and waiting always on his pleasure; fear continually lest we should dishonour him; in every thing we do, in every thing we enjoy, in every thing we use, fear only lest we should displease him -These are but parts of a true practical knowledge of God. -Were that in the poffession of the heart, these would be necesfary fruits of it; and therefore, where these are wanting, we must be said not to know God. But let us come to a more particular consideration of them. And the

First of them is trust. The feripture account given of God above was, that he is an almighty, most wise, and unchangeable Spirit, living every where, disposing every thing, and most mercifully disposed towards his finful creatures in Jesus Christ. The knowledge therefore we ought to have of God is, that in the Redeemer he is an almighty and most merciful Father, ever present with us, ever able, and ever ready to do us good. He reveals himself in this manner, and would have us trust in him, that is, not to trust in any thing else, not to distrust him, but to rely quietly, affuredly, and satisfiedly on him, in all cases temporal and spiritual. Wherefore to trust in God, is not to distrust him, nor to trust in any thing else. Let us see now what answer we can make to this, in respect of things temporal and eternal.

In respect of things temporal, have put your whole trust in No. 4.

God? In your prosperity have ye put your whole trust in God? Have you never made gold your hope, or faid to fine gold, Thou art my confidence?\* Have ye never thought your safety confifted in the abundance of things which you possessed? In the midst of your abundance, have you had as much dependance on God for your daily bread, as if ye had not known where to get the next morfel? See whether in truth there has not been the very reverse of this. You have been full, and have denied God, did not find your want of his providential care, did not ascribe all to his bounty, did not live on the promise that he would care for you, did not humbly and constantly acknowledge, with a becoming fense of it on your heart, that you received all from him, and held all at his pleafure. And do you thus trust God this day, you that have your tabernacles in peace, and eat bread to the full? It is the hardest part of trufting in God, when we are in the possession of his favours, especially when we seem to be in any established posfession of them, we are apt insensibly to forget who gave, and who continues them to us; and our deceitful hearts to withdraw their confidence from God, and repose a great part of it at least on the creatures God hath given us. This not trusting to God in prosperity is the greatest inlet to worldly mindedness, and the true reason why it is so very disficult for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. And if you have failed here, if you have not trusted to God in prosperity, have you not also distrusted him in adversity? When crosses met you, when distresses fell upon you, were you not ready to put your trust in man or money, or schemes and contrivances of your own, without referring yourfelf to God? And when, perhaps (having found no other refource) you have referred yourself to God in your worldly difficulties, have you not still distrusted him, conceived unworthy fears, as if he had forgotten, or were not able, or were not careful to do for you what was best? Have you not still been doubting and impatient? Where then was your trust in God? Why furely his hand was in all your difficulties, and he prefided over them, but you could not believe that, or did but half believe it, you could not trust him. Have you not on these occasions been doing like the Ifraelites, and with a base, defective, limited faith and trust in God, crying out in their spirit, ' Behold he

fmote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? Can he provide Resh for his people?" Or when you would put your whole trust in God, and leave the matter in his hands, was there yet no wavering and staggering, no fear and doubt, no restless wishing and longing you could fee an end of your distress? And then again, in the bodily afflictions fent on you, have you always quietly rested on the will of God? What? Was there never any murmuring, never any impatience, never any thing like faying to God, Why hast thou thus dealt with me? Never any millike of God's doings, never any fainting under the burden, never any leaning to other helps separate from him, never any thinking it long, never any hasty calling on God to fulfil his promifes? But you are ready by this time to fay, Why, you expect of us the perfection of faints in heaven.— No, I am only explaining to you, what trufting on God is, and helping you to fee how far short you have come of it, and that with this view, that your pride may be confounded, that ye may be fensible you are just nothing but miserable sinners, and fo laying aside all pretences to merit in yourselves, you may betake yourselves to him who alone is worthy and able to fave, with much shame in yourselves, and with deep forrow for what you have committed. O that I could fo preach the law to you, and the curse annexed to every transgression of it, as to drive you all to the arms of the Redeemer for refuge! But again,

In respect of things spiritual, have ye put your whole trust in God? Have ye never had any leaning to your own righte-ousness, conceiting you were something, when you were nothing? Or to your own strength, saying with Peter, 'I am 'ready to follow thee, though all men deny thee?' Have you never mistrusted God's promises in Jesus Christ, conceived hard thoughts of God's dealing by you, apt to ask, Why hast thou suffered me thus to be tried and tempted?' Why go I 'thus heavily while the enemy oppressent me? Why dost thou 'hide thy face from me? Where are thy old loving-kindnesses?' In the various dispensations of the Spirit which your soul hath known, have you never grown consident, and said, in your heart, 'I shall never be moved?' Or grown impatient

and displeased that things were no better with you, instead of being thankful that you were any thing at all? Have you never trusted on good frames, when you have enjoyed them, ready to make them your Christ; or repined under bad ones, ready to conclude, God had forfaken you? Have ye never presumed, never been secure, never said, I shall see good, though you were walking in the imagination of your heart? In short, can you fay, you have never trusted on any thing else but God's mercy, according to his promise; that you never mistrusted that promise, that calmly and confidently, in all cases, whether comforted or afflicted, you put your trust in that only? O that you were come to this now at last, that you could fay this day, 'I have no confidence in the fl. sh, no confidence in any thing I do, any thing I am, any thing I \* am capable of! Thy mercy, that is sufficient for me; under the shadow of thy wings shall I be safe, I know thou art able to keep me, in life, in death, in judgment, to ever-· lasting thou art able to keep my foul which I have committed to thee, and I defire none but thee to support me; thou art my all sufficiency, I wait on thy will, my foul hangeth on thy arm, do as thou feeft best, dispense to me what thou pleasest, try me as thou wilt, use me as thou seest fit, my trust is in thee, I leave myself with thee, I have no longer a will of mine own!' O that you could fay this with fincerity this day! But, alas! how far short do we all come! How distant is this from what the most of you can say with any truth!

On the whole, are we clear in this matter? Have we put our whole trust in God in every case of soul and body? Now if we have not, if we have trusted in any thing else, we have robbed God of his all-sufficiency, ascribing it to the creature; if we have mistrusted him by uncomely doubts and fears, we have reproached his mercisulness, questioned his faithfulness, suspected his power, and denied his promises. See how much sin there is in our wretched hearts! O when will our mouths be in the dust!

And what fay you now, brethren? Are ye not glad ye have a Saviour and Interceffor at God's right hand? Are you for his righteourners or your own? Your own, alas, what?

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Where is it? O be careful that the fense of your own naked-ness bring you to lay hold on the righteousness of God.

I referve the love and fear of God to another opportunity. Mean time try your hearts, and humble yourselves in the sight and sense of your sinsulness, who have been this day convinced, both that you know not God as you ought to know, and also that you have not put that trust in his name which his word requires of you. And may the Lord enable you so to humble yourselves now, that you may be exalted in the day of the Lord Jesus.

# SERMON XXVII.

#### GALATIANS iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

HE moral law of God, the Ten Commandments, it was proposed to consider as serving the purposes of a schoolmaster, in bringing us unto Christ, by making known our sins to us. Sin is the transgression of God's law; and if we are all chargeable with this transgression, we have all cause of humiliation. If every transgression and disobedience received formerly, and hath still annexed to it a just recompence of reward,\* the deep meditation thereupon must needs enforce us

to flee for refuge to the hope set before us.+

It was in these views that the \(\text{Fen Commandments}\) were to be taken under consideration; and the first of them was entered upon the last Lord's day. In speaking to which it was insisted upon and shewn, that a practical knowledge of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as revealed in scripture, was the whole of religion. And after some enquiries concerning our diligence, humility, and success in seeking after this knowledge, we proceeded to a more particular consideration of so much of that practical knowledge of God as falls under the First Commandment. And this was said to consist in the three great duties of trust, love, and fear The former of them was then dispatched. And I come now to speak of the second.

Secondly, Therefore, Do we love, and have we loved the Lord our God, with all our heart, mind, foul, and firength? This a

practical knowledge of God implies, and as far as we fail herein, we come thort of knowing God. That we may be the better able to bring our hearts and conduct under examination on this important inquiry, discover our great and shameful defects, and so find plenteous matter of humiliation and supplication for mercy, it will be needful you be fully advifed of the account the scripture gives us of God, as eminently entitled to the love of our whole heart. The love of God is the heart's uniting itself to him as its sole happiness, and that from a discovery made in the mind, that he is a happiness infinitely desirable. And that God is a happiness infinitely defirable, is made manifest by the revelation he hath given of himself in the scriptures. They give us such an account of God, and of his dealings, that we cannot but fee every lovely perfection abiding in him. How lovely is that glorious Being in whom is infinite power, influenced by infinite goodness, and guided by infinite wisdom? Who, infinitely bleffed in the enjoyment of himfelf, needing nothing, and incapable of receiving any addition to his happiness, at the mere inflance of his all-gracious mind formed, not only the powers of heaven, but man on earth, providing for him a noble habitation, furnished with every thing fit for convenience or use; who hath yet more plenteously exhibited the richness of that good will which dwelleth in him, in the redemption of the world by Jesus Christ? Such is our God; a blessed Being, whose excellencies challenge the choicest affections of our heart; to whom to be united as the great fountain of happiness, is the duty and bleffedness of every reasonable creature, in whose favour is their life; in whose presence their joy is full. It is easy to see, that to seek for happiness in the creature rather than God, to have the heart united to it rather than him, is at once the highest affront offered to God, and the faddest injury done ourselves. Well may God expect we love him with all our heart, and mind, and foul, and strength, being fuch as he is, and we fo obliged and bound to him as we are! but have we thus done? Or do we it now? For the more easy resolution of which inquiry, it will be needful to observe, that the heart's loving God, or uniting itself to him as its fole happiness, implies these three things.

First, The highest esteem of him. Secondly, The most ardent desire after him.

Thirdly, The placing our whole delight in him. Thus to effeem, defire, and delight in God is to love him; to make him our happiness. And if we have always done so without reserve, valuing, desiring, and delighting in other things only as they have reference to God, we may boldly say, we have loved him with all our hearts. Let us see now if any of us

can be bold to fay, we have done, or do this.

First, Have you esteemed God as your chief good, your only sufficient happiness and portion? I appeal to your own conscience. Have you been always fensible in your heart, that the enjoyment of God's favour and prefence would make you completely bleffed; that, this enjoyed, nothing would be wanting; no circumstances would make you in the least unhappy?— Have you always found, or do you now find fuch a fulness in God, that God enjoyed, you could lack nothing? Is this really the fact? How low, then, your esteem of every thing befide; how incapable have you always feen every earthly thing to make you happy; how little value have you fet on the efteem of men, the interest of the world, and the enjoyments of life! but hath this been your case? Have you not esteemed these too much, and God too little? Whence is it otherwise that, to please men, you have so often made compliances dishonourable to God? I hat you have so continually conformed to the debauched manners of the times, and the humours of bad company? Whence is it otherwise, that when your worldly interest hath been at stake, your holy resolution hath so often failed you, you could not act and speak with that freedom you were wont, and you felt so much fear of disobliging? Whence otherwise, that in the enjoyments of life. you have so often forgot yourself, abused your time and your talents in them, been fo dull without them, and fo happy with them: Whence all or any of this, but that your heart hath conceived too much value for thefe earthly things, and too little for God? Hath esteemed the praise, interest, and enjoyments of life, to a degree which evidently shew you have not esteemed God as your only all-sufficient happiness? It is plain your heart must have expected some undue happiness from them, fince you have in this manner finned against God for the fake of them. Or do you now esteem God as your only portion? Can ye fay this day with the Pfalmist, thou art my D080

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portion, O Lord?\* What? Can the glutton and the drunkard, whose god is their belly, fay this? Can the covetous person, whose god is mammon, fay this? Can they who are in friendthip with the world time fervers, men-pleafers, fons and daughters of pleasure, say so? Every one who hath set up his idol in his heart, whatever it be, can he fay, The Lord is my portion? All fuch have evidently taken to themselves other gods to serve them, and that because they expect happiness from them; not one of these persons doth or can esteem God as a portion. And all of us, have we hewn to ourselves no broken cisterns? Are we got, as we ought, above the esteem and value of every earthly thing? Do we regard them all with an holy indifference, because of that satisfaction we have in God, as an alone, and most sufficient happiness? Whence is it then, that our hearts are so ready to care for the morrow, to meditate and plan schemes for earthly happiness; to be overpleased with prosperity; to be so anxious about futurity; fo fearful of every appearance of worldly inconvenience and lofs? Whence, I fay, is it that our wretched hearts are fo apt to be careful about the morrow, and bring even on the most advanced Christians so much painful watchfulness and self-denial, to keep them in any tolerable measure of content and mortifiedness concerning worldly things, unless it be that there lies lurking in the bottom of them a certain expectation of happiness from these things of the world, which at least shews, we come very short of esteeming God as our all-sufficient happiness.

Secondly, Have you always had, or have you now a most are dent desire after Go? That is, after his favour and presence as alone capable to make you happy? Have you always desired God's favour? if so, you have ardently sought after it; with the whole bent of your soul, and without intermission; your soul athirst for God, for the living God: but hath this been really the case, and always the case? Have the things of the world never diverted your pursuit? Have you never lost sight of this blessed object? When you were young, did your heart experience no desires after pleasure and vanity, which, if they did not (as is most likely) render you entirely regardless of God's favour, did at least represente ardour of your desire after it? Or since that time, hath not the cares of the world

<sup>\*</sup> Psalm cxix, 57.

hindered you? Have you all along used the world in such a manner, as that you have not abused it, so as to become forgetful thereby of the great defign of your life? Should you even be able to fay, that all along this hath been your aim from your youth up till now, are you also able to add, you have been defiring God's favour with all your strength; with an ardour and earnestness suited to the importance of the thing to yourself, and the condescension of God in offering his favour to you? Alas! how cold-hearted, how lukewarm, how lifeless have you, sometimes, shall I say, or always been? the lovers of this world, how have they left you behind in the eagerness of their pursuits? The lovers of pleasure, unweariedly intent upon vanity and folly, how have they reproved your remissines in seeking the divine favour? O! how much weariness and fainting, how much flumbering and sleeping have you known? If you have run well a little, have you not been tired quickly, and out of breath, and ready to give over?-And then what way have you taken to God's favour? Have you never run unlawfully in your own strength and righteousness? The way to God's favour is but one to us finners, and that is, the Redeemer, who claims to himself the prerogative of being the way; and infifts, that no one cometh to the Father but by him. Have you therefore fought and defired God's favour, as always and ardently, fo humbly, as a finner should do? What? Did you always look upon yourfelf as a poor miserable sinner, who in yourself had not the least pretence to God's favour? Did you never conceit you were good enough to deferve fomething, and able enough to do fomething? Hath Jefus been always your strength and righteoufness, while you have been feeking to be, or continue in the favour of God? What? Hath it been by prayers, and watchings, and strivings, and felf-denials, and constant perseverance and patience; and yet by disclaiming all manner of merit in all this, leaning only upon Christ, that you have been defiring and feeking God's favour? And then, if you have been ardently desirous of a sense of God's favour, you will have taken all due care not to lofe what you had attained of it. But have you been duly careful herein? Have you never grieved the Spirit, or neglected means, or flighted warnings, or ventured into needless temptations, or neglected known duties? Also hath your defire and care to please God in all things things been expressive of all desire of his favour? It is impossible you should be setting a high value on his favour, and yet regardless whether the things you do please him or not.— Have you then been careful to please God only, whomsoever else you might displease? Hath it been always your study to do his will? and have you never consulted your own? Have you been continually waiting on God, in the spirit of converted Saul, asking, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?'\*— Have you never considered your own humour, inclination, ease, pleasure, or interest, saying at all times, and in all cases, in opposition to sless and blood, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? I am content to do it.

Such as these are evident consequences of an earnest desire. after God's favour as our happiness; and as much as we have failed in any of these, we must allow ourselves to have come short in the love of God; and who can fay that he hath not failed? Or who, that he doth not come short? What hath been hitherto advanced, must be insisted on to have been, and to be more or lefs the case of those who can say with truth in the generality of their conduct, 'Our detire is to thee, O God, and to the glory of thy name.' And what then must be the case of such as have no desire after God's favour at all ' How must they be condemned as not lovers of God; the lovers of this world, whose defires rise no higher than this base earth, and whose views are all confined to this side the grave, how must these be condemned? And I fear, yea, I doubt not, it is the case of many among you My friends! there are among you, fuch as live without God in the world. and what is the strangest thing in the world, (if any thing in corrupt nature can be strange) have not the least defire after God's favour, though you know in your consciences you fhall perish without it. You may indeed be ready to fay,-That you defire his favour. So you may, as far as defiring he may not punish you will go. But to fay, you desire God's favour as your happiness, this you cannot say with any truth; for every day convinces of the contrary. The happiness you defire is merely a worldly one; and therefore you do not defire God for a portion. And fince you will have your portion in this world, I cannot fee how you can so much as expect the favour of God, fince you do not so much as desire it. O that

you would confider how every moment you are living in a breach, and that an allowed one, of God's law; while awake or afleep, at church, or at home, you are found not to defire God's favour! and has it not been always thus with you.— Have you not been always children of this world in the defires of your hearts? If this hath been, and is your cafe, I befeech you deceive not yourfelves by any appearances. Be you as liberal, chafte, fober, honeft, exact in religious exercifes as you will, it is plain your heart is not in the way of God's commandments, for you defire not God's favour as your happinefs. O! confider this, while yet there is time. While you may have God's favour, confider this, left he pluck

you away, and there be none to deliver you.

What I have been now faying concerning the defire of God's favour, I might fay over again with regard to the defire of a fense of God s gracious presence, for it is impossible to defire the one without the other. He that defires God's favour must needs desire his presence, wherein alone here and hereafter, is found the actual enjoyment of his favour: and whoever desires God's presence, must needs desire his favour, without which his presence would be terrible. Nevertheless, I will fuggest a short inquiry on this point, that you may see how far short you come in your desires after God. Hath your care to walk in the fense of God's presence manifested a due desire after it, as your greatest present happiness ! You have fadly forgotten God, you own; you are fadly apt to do fo to this hour: but are you fure this is not owing to fome carelessness on your part? Have you been enough diligent to obtain a fense of his presence with you? Or when you have obtained that facred communion, have you been diligent to maintain it, by feafonable meditation, by frequent ejaculation, by constant employment of yourself in some appointed work? Have you not carelessly lost fight of God in vain conversation, in trifling levity, in abused recreations? If so; where then was your ardent defire of God's presence, when you could so easily miss it for the want of a little reflection, or be content to part with it for vanity and amusement? It is well if some do not wilfully put God out of their minds, running purposely into company and riot, to lose fight of him and themselves. It is well, if others be not advised so to do, lest the thought of God should make them melancholy.

my friends! do we defire to fee God in heaven? Surely that place will be no heaven for us, if we do not. But if we do, if we reckon on God's presence there, as the great joy of that blissful mansion, how comes it that some so wilfully, and others so heedlessly forget God? I hat we have all so much to blame ourselves for, in our little care to walk with God? We defire not God's favour, but exactly in proportion as we defire his presence. Judge therefore how cold your defires after God have been; and remember that he who can truly say, I have none in heaven but thee, can say with equal truth, There is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. I go on

to the other point.

Thirdly, Have you always delighted, or do you delight in God as your chief happiness? This delight consists in a certain calm, fleady, and rational complacency in God, as an all fufficient happiness, the foul resting on him as every way excellent and fatisfying. The commandment requires we should thus delight in God, that we should do so at all times, and that we should delight in nothing elfe as our happiness; and we have feen that God is every way a fuitable object of this our delight and joy: because in himself he is every way excellent, fuited to be fuch a fatisfying happiness to his rational creatures; and hath revealed and proposed himself to us of the world in this view. But now have, or do we thus delight in God? It supposes two things, that under the sense of God's presence with us, and his fatherly direction of us, we have always enjoyed a thankful and contented frame of spirit. But hath our foul been always in this contented and thankful state? Or if composed, hath this composedness arisen only from a full satisfiedness in God? How far is this from the case of any of us! some to this day do not so much as know what I am speaking of; are quite strangers, as they have always been, to this joy in God; perhaps would be ready to dispute whether there is any fuch thing, at least any possibility of so being content and thankful in God in certain feafons of worldly diffress. And which of you hath always thus delighted in God, and that in fuch a measure, as to possess always a contented and thankful spirit? Have we never been discontented and diffatisfied? Have we never been unthankful? Whence else have we been so ready to complain? Whence have we so often fallen into, or perhaps lived long in an unthankful mood,

mood, peevish, fretful, and displeased with every thing, forgetting all God's other favours, because one was taken away or wanting? And what was that one thing wanting at the bottom, but satisfiedness in God? Say, have you never been discontented and unthankful? What, in no case? What! not when you have been disappointed of what you had set your heart upon; when you have thought yourfelf ill used by your friends; when you have met with difficulties in your worldly affairs; when you have been fick; when dangers. public or private, threatened you; when your schemes have not answered, or been delayed; or when you met with great and trying temptations; when you were evil spoken of; when you were suffering for righteousness in your character or interest; when your foul did not thrive as you would; when your corruptions were strong, and, as it were, let loose upon you? when you feemed to gain little ground upon them; when disorder hindered you from the free exercise of prayer, meditation, and the like; when death or providence took away your friends; when infirmity or age was growing upon you? In all cases have you been content and thankful? And as far as you have feemed to be fo, hath it been only because of your fatisfiedness in God? Hath this been your only joy when things have gone well with you? And this your only refuge, when things have gone amis? The most of the joy in the world is plainly a carnal joy, a joy fpringing from youth, health, easy circumstances, chearful companions, worldly gratifications; have none of these things been in part, or the whole, the matter of your supreme joy? Religious joy is a rare joy; but carnal joy there is enough, and too much of. Eat, drink, and be merry, this joy abounds; but, When the fig tree doth not blossom, when there is no fruit in the vine, then to jor in God,\* this is rarely to be met with. Or if we can rejoice in God, be content and thankful in adversity, how hard is it to delight in him only in prosperity?

Thus I have opened to you the great duty of loving God: and I need not ask whether you be guilty or not. Our happiness is, my brethren, that God hath provided a ransom for us in Jesus Christ. But let none think that propitiation sufficient without more ado, lest he abuse my design and his own

foul;

foul; I mean not to give any the least room for security, while I shew that all are guilty. I would have you all, with deep humiliation, with self-lothing and shame, betake yourselves to Christ. And I declare, in the name of God, that whoever doth not thus with humble acknowledgment and confession of his vileness, lay his sins on the head of Jesus, his sins shall be on his own head.—There is yet the fear of God to be spoken of, which must be deferred to our next meeting.

## SERMON XXVIII.

### GALATIANS iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our school naster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Am now to speak of the fear of God, in correspondence with the design of the text, to stir you up with deep hu-

miliation to betake yourselves unto Christ for mercy.

God, confidered in his divine majesty, as the absolute Sovereign of the world, is the object of fear. And inafmuch as his kingdom reacheth unto all, and he is every way qualified to maintain the glory and the rights of it, he must be entitled to the highest fear from all his creatures. It is God's wisdom, power, justice, and sovereignty over all creatures, which render him the object of all fear. So the scriptures speak; they represent God's wisdom and knowledge as a foundation of fearing him: 'Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? faith the Lord: Do not I fill heaven and earth? faith the Lord.'\* And again, 'All things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do.'t So the power of God is fet forth as a motive to fear: 'O foolish people, and without understanding, fear ye onot me? faith the Lord: Will ye not tremble at my prefence, which have placed the fand for the bound of the fea, by a perpetual decree that it annot pass it, and though the waves thereof tofs themselves, yet can they not prevail; tho' they roar, yet can they not pass over it?' Also because of his

<sup>\*</sup> Jeremiah xxiii. 24.

<sup>†</sup> Heb. iv. 13.

his justice he is to be feared, 'If ye call on the Father, who, without respect of persons, judgeth according to every one's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.\* Lastly, because of his sovereignty over all creatures, God is to be feared. 'If I be a Master, where is my fear? I am a great King, faith the Lord of hosts, and my name is dreadful ao mong the heathen. + Yet however God, by reason of his wildom, power, justice, and sovereignty, be the object of all fear, yet he is not actually feared, but when he is confidered as present: in which view Job saith, 'Therefore am I troubled at his prefence; when I consider, I am afraid of him.'t And the Holy Spirit gives us to understand, by the mouth of Joshua, that God manifests himself in miraculous doings, to the end 'that all the people of the earth may know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty, that ye might fear the Lord your

• God for ever.'

Now, though God be the object of all fear, by reason of his glorious Majesty, yet he will be differently feared by his reasonable creatures, according as they are differently disposed towards him, and have or have not an interest in his favour. I'he bleffed angels, and perfected faints above, confcious of his favour towards them, and their love towards him, have a fear of God, which is most properly a high reverence of his majefty, and perfections; possessing their spirits with a most awful approbation of his government, with the most pleasing submissions thereto, and with a most perfect detestation of whatever is contrary to it; and this is what is figured out to us by the angels being faid to cover their faces before the Lord. Again, on the other part, the inhabitants of hell are possessed with a fear of God's majesty, which is full of horror, because they have both the utmost detestation of his government, and lie under the immediate fury of his wrath, which also they are conscious they shall never escape, because they are fure he will never be reconciled to them. The devils believe and tremble.\*\* In like manner, the fear of God will be various upon earth, according as men are confcious that they No. 4 have

<sup>\* 1</sup> Peter i. 17.

<sup>‡</sup> Job xxiii. 15.

<sup>&</sup>amp; Isaiah vi. 2.

<sup>. +</sup> Mal. i. 6-14.

<sup>|</sup> Joshua iv. 25.

<sup>\*\*</sup> James, ii. 19.

have or have not an interest in his favour; if the interest in God's savour be sure, and love of God more advanced, the sear of God will have more of that heavenly reverence, and less of that tormenting apprehension just spoken of. If there be no interest in God's savour, and the conscience is 'awakened to see the danger of the state, the fear will be a bad one, approaching to the dread of devils, perhaps void of all reverence, and big with hatred and dislike of God's power and majesty. Yet two things must be noted for the clearing this point.

First, That fince we are now in a state of trial, our fear of God may not, and cannot advance to such a degree of heavenly reverence, as excludes all apprehension of God's future judgments; for this were to cut off one of the two great motives to the practice of religion. Christ teaches us to have respect to the wrath to come, that we may slee from it, as well as to the recompence of reward, that we may obtain it: for he saith, Fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.\*—And it is plain, it Paul had respect to it, when he saith, Less

that by any means I should be a cast-away.+

Secondly That there can be actually no fear of God, where there is no fense of God s presence on the heart. There is no fear of God before the eyes of the ungodly; because such persons have not God in all their thoughts. The reason is, that now God waits on them with great mercy and forbearance, and they lose sight of him in their carnal enjoyments, while he withholds his sury from falling on them. But in the world to come, it shall not be so: there the soul of the saint shall be ever full of reverence, because God shall eternally communicate a most delightful sense of his presence to it; and there the soul of the sinner shall ceaselessly tremble, because God alfo shall be present with it, pouring out the sury of his indignation upon it.

From the whole we may easily collect, that the fear of God in man is not such an angelic reverence, as if we had never sinned against him; (for in this respect there is a difference between angels and saints, even in heaven; the saints never forget they were sinners, though the remembrance be without pain or fear, yea rather with a humility that enlivens all

their

their praise and joy) or as if we were now perfect, or were delivered from all the pains and penalties which the justice of God hath annexed to sin; but it is such an apprehension and veneration of God's wise, mighty, and glorious Majesty, as makes us jealous for his glory, and fearful of his displeasure: and this both as we have offended him, and lest we should offend him.

I. As we have offended God, this apprehension and veneration of God's Majesty should keep alive upon our hearts a due and deep concern for his glory, which we have thereby injured, and for his displeasure, which we have thereby incurred.

First, A deep concern for the glory of God's majesty, which we have injured by our fins. We cannot be supposed to have any veneration for God's majesty without this Let us see how a concern for God's glory in such a case doth express itself.

First, In godly forrow. Peter, as foon as he had denied his Master, went out and wept bitterly; \* for what did he weep, but the dishonour he had done his Master? It was that which pained and grieved his heart. O what a monster did he think himself! and have we loathed ourselves, and humbled ourfelves in godly forrowings, whenever we have dishonoured God's majesty by our fins? Whence is it then, that so many of you have committed, and too many of you still do commit the most deadly fins, the fins of swearing, and drunkenness, and filthiness, and sabbath-breaking, and feel no concern about it, find no shame upon the matter before God, if ye take to yourselves any shame before men? Whence, like the sons of Sodom, are you bold and hardy to do what you lift? Alas, with infolent difregard of God's majesty, you say in your hearts, Who is Lord over us? While you sin without fear, yea, make a mock at fin, and despise the fear of the Lord. -Thanks be to God, you are not all thus without understanding; yet all of you, how disproportionate have been your forrowings to your fins? Have we not all reason to complain of the hardness of our hearts, that we have dishonoured God so much, and loathed ourfelves fo little?

Secondly, In justifying God's mojesty in the fentence that he hath denounced against fin, according to that humble language; That R 2

thou mightest be justified in thy fayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged \* Now have we justified God in his tentence against us? And have we always done thus? Hath the veneration we have had for God's majesty, made the curse he hath pronounced against us appear equitable to us? Have we never secretly questioned the justice of it, or complained of its severity? Many are doing this openly, and insisting that the righteous God will not, or shall not thus deal with his creatures? Many do fo openly; but if you have escaped this infolence, have you never done it fecretly, either questioning whether you were not fo righteous as to deferve God's favour, or disputing whether this curse justly belonged to you, or conceiving hard thoughts of him concerning it, or murmuringly demanding in your heart, Why hast thou made me thus? -So charging your fins on God to justify yourself. Have you always lain down under the stroke of justice giving glory to God's adorable majesty, and saving, from the full conviction of your heart, It is of thy mercies, O Lord, that I am not utterly confumed; thou hast done right, but I have done wi kedly enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy fight shall no flesh living be justified. Will you venture to fay, you have thus acquitted and justified God in your heart, in all and every one of your fins, without murmurings, and without disputings?

Thirdly, In a quiet submission to God's corrections. Have you always acquiesced in the justice, and even the mildness of them, that they were less than you deserved; faying, Righteous art thou, O Lord, and just are thy judgments! Thou art righteous in all thou hast brought upon us! Why should a man complain for the punishment of his sins? Brethren! have we never forgotten God in the matter? or complained with the wicked Cain,-My punishment is greater than I can bear? or been ready to curse the day that we were born, with Job? Have we always owned, 'Thy judgments are just, when the defire of our eyes hath been taken away at a stroke, when our prospects have failed us, our friends have been taken from us; when we have been left destitute and forsaken, when God's visitations have fallen thick upon us, one following in quick fuccession upon another? In all cases have we been quiet, nor asked God, What dost thou? Adoring his majesty, and giving glory in the bottom of our hearts to his justice? The too common way is, we provoke God by our fins to punish us, and then quarrel with him for doing fo. O w' ere is the reverent veneration for God's just majesty, while we are fretting against all his dispensations which do not fuit our humours; sinning with a high hand, and with as high a hand refusing to be corrected; murmuring. impatient, angry, as if God were doing us wrong, as if he had no right to do with us as he pleases, as if by our dutiful demeanor we had a claim upon all his favours! A right apprehension of, and veneration for God's majesty, while we see what fin is committed against it in the world, should make us rather admire there is not more mifery fent down among us, than repine there is so much: and he who is acquainted with God's glorious fovereignty, and his own manifold transgressions, hath no cause to startle at the prospect of that wretchedness he has to go through in this vale of misery; at the pains, ficknesses, death, which he sees waiting for him. But,

Secondly, As we have finned against God's majesty, our hearts should be impressed with a due concern about his displea-fure, which we have thereby incurred. But now let us see what concern we have had, or yet have, about God's displeasure a-

gainst our fins.

First, Have we not been, or are none of us now, secure in our fins? David could fay. My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments; \* but hath it not been, or is it not our language still, Soul, take thy eale, eat, drink, and be merry? Have we never acted as though we had made a covenant with death, and put away the evil day far from us?— If we have not refused the sear of the Lord more or less, even to turn with all our hearts at his reproofs, whence is it we are all fuch poor scholars in that wisdom which the fear of the Lord would have taught us? Or whence have fo many of you this lesson all of it still to learn, after all of us have passed through fo many calls, warnings, providences, and judgments? May we not all fay, we have been shamefully secure about God's displeasure at our sins? My brethren, let conscience be consulted, are there none among you this day, who have cause to fay, 'I am stupid, I am senseles; fool that I am, I live

as if God were not able to punish; as if my forgetfulness I should itop the course of God's vengeance; I live as easy as if I were fure God was reconciled to me, and death, come when it will, should certainly convey me to Abraham's bofom; and yet I am fure, as I am that I live, that death, fhould it come, (and it is coming, it is striding up towards " me) that should death come now (I cannot but tremble at the thought!) it would take me away, and hurry me, alas! onot to Abraham's bosom, not to the paradife of God, not to 6 the bleffed place where there are pleasures for evermore, but (and can I any longer be easy at the reflection i) to misery, and flames, and torments? Yes, death, should it now come would carry me at once, without delay, without hope, without mercy, to that dark and dreadful place, where dwell the devils and all the curied of God for ever, and I to dwell among them also for ever!'

Secondly, Hath our concern about God's displeasure by reafon of our fins, driven us to God's mercy in Jesus Christ?-They are few who have so much concern about God's displeafure against them for their sins past, as to come to Christ with an honest and true heart. There are none indeed, who would not choose to be happy, and they would be glad if Christ would make them so, but it must be on their own terms; he must dispense with their forsaking sin, with their self-denial, and taking up the crofs, and leading an holy and an heavenly life, elfe they will be excused. They have not so much fear of God's displeasure as this comes to. They will hold it out a little longer; they will rather run the risque of all that God can inflict, than submit to these hard gospel terms. What I am faying is no new or strange thing. It is as old at least as the days of Christ, when, we are told, Many went back, not able to endure such hard sayings; \* and it is no strange thing to one and another of you here present, I doubt not: yea, we all know it, in some degree, by experience. The very best have found it no easy matter to part with all for Christ, whatever apprehensions they might have had of God's displeasure. But,

Thirdly, Supposing you have betaken yourself to mercy in the Redeemer, are you to have no concern about your past fins?

fins? Yes furely. I faid above, there will be a humbling remembrance of fin in heaven; and I fay now, that the best saint upon earth is not at liberty to forget his past fins. I am sure neither David nor St Paul did so: and that to keep them humble, to enliven faith, to excite love, (according to that of our Lord, He that hath much forgiven, will love much; \* to stir up praife, thankfulness, and redeeming the time. And do we, or have we as we ought, thus concerned ourselves about past, and I suppose now forgiven fins? Who will say this? Who will fay it for fo much as one hour? It is not fit we should be terrified about past sins when we are come to Christ; but it is fit we should remember the displeasure of God under which we then lived, the dishonour we did his majesty, the danger we brought on our fouls and the grief we brought on the foul of Jesus. This is a part of a religious and childlike fear of God; and I leave you all to judge if you do not come short in it. -

Fourthly, Fear of God's displeasure by reason of past sins is often flavish, and that is very contrary to the fear we are now speaking of; and peculiarly dishonourable to God as a merciful, as well as righteous Governor of the world. This flavish fear hath no concern about God's displeasure simply considered, but about the punishment which is the consequence of sin. and of that displeasure. A good child will be forry he should have done any thing to deserve his father's displeasure, a selfish flave regards not how any are affected by what he hath done. but what he is like to fuffer. This latter is a bad fear, and contrary to the duty we are speaking of. Yet if your greatest concern upon the review of your fins is, or hath been, that you may not be punished; if you mean nothing but yourself; if you are not ingenuously grieved, but only frightened at the thought that God should be displeased with you; If you could be eafily enough reconciled to have finned, could you be fure God will never call you to account for your fins, yours is a. Davish fear; and it argues that you have not any veneration for God's majesty, nor childlike concern about his displeasure against you: this was the fear of Adam after he had finned · I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid.'-It is time now to pass on to the other branch of the fear of God, having fpoken

fpoken fufficiently of that concern which a due apprehension and veneration of his awful Majesty, as we have offended him, should preferve in us.

II. The other was, that such a fear of God as makes us jealous of his honour, and sea sul of his displeasure, should keep us from offending him and displeasing him. Now such a fear of offending God implies these sour things.

First, An absolute detestation of all sin.

Secondly, An actual rejection of all evil motions in our heart. Thirdly, A watchfulness against all temptations.

Fourthly, An holy care not to dishonour God in the use of any

of his good creatures.

First, Have we not cause of humiliation, and of crying unto God for mercy, in that we have not had a greater detestation of fin? To hate fin is the great fruit of a true fear of God: for as a true fear of God is a most high veneration of God's majesty, and a most awful apprehension of God's displeasure, so where this is, there cannot but be an entire hatred of all that fin, which dishonours God's majesty and incurs his displeasure, and is the only thing that can do fo. Wherefore there is no fuch thing as really fearing God, without detesting and lothing fin, and this of whatever kind it be. Sin will be absolutely and univerfally hated, whatever the true fear of God is. Indeed, the love of fin is confistent enough with a flavish fear of God; may is, what is a main cause of that slavish fear of punishment. God would not be dreaded, were not his government hated, and it is a love of fin only can make it fo. We shall need therefore look well to it, that we absolutely hate from the bottom of our hearts all evil ways, all finful practices, and all finful tempers, and all finful motions to the one and the other that are in our nature, else we have not the true fear of God in us. It is eafy to apply this. The carnal mind, with all worldly, and proud affections and lusts, have they always been hateful to us, and hated by us as they ought? Who hath not found fome longing after the flesh-pots \*? or who hath so perfected holiness in the fear of God as to be able to say, All false ways I have utterly abhorred + Were this the case, how comes it that the catalogue of our actual fins is so large, and that we

<sup>\*</sup> Exodus xvi. 3.

<sup>†</sup> Psalms exix. 128. Old Translation.

have all fo much to confess, and to be forgiven? Would our debt have amounted to fo large a fum, had we actually, absolutely, and duly hated and abhorred all evil ways? No. ! he love of them was at the bottom too much, and the fear of God was too little, in the many fins we have to answer for. When we at any time indulged intemperance, was there not the love of the flesh. When we made compliances, through fear of men, was there not the love of praise? When we truckled to the humour of some one we had expectations from, was there not the love of the world prevailing in us? Doubtless, we have not feared God as we ought; and I wish there may be any true fear of God in the most of us now. In such case, we shall quickly see many fins laid aside, which are now in practice among us; and therefore, in practice, because we love them.

Secondly, Have we actually rejected all evil motions in our hearts? This is but a confequence of the other. And the reason why I make a distinct head of it is, only to have it more distinctly noted; because a watchfulness over our hearts, and a ready rejection of whatever evil motions are raifed there by the body of fin, is the best and only certain fign of a true hatred of fin, and confequently of a true fear of God. I stop not to ask, Whether you have never indulged evil motions in your heart? Luttful, worldly, proud, or malicious imaginations? This is but too certain; but I observe that such motions, improved into evil imaginations and thoughts, by the confent to, and delight of the heart in them, are both the nurfery of all outward fin, and in themselves so many actual fins before God; who perfectly knows the inward parts, requires truth there, and plainly discovers that in such cases shere is a great defect in the fear of his holy name. It was the fear of the heart-fearching God that made David fo earneftly pray, ' Prove me, and examine my thoughts, look well if there be any way of wickedness in me.'\* And we must fee to it, whether there be in us such a holy fear of God, as makes us watchful over our deceirful hearts that are continually, like a muddy fountain, fending out fome filthy thing or other; and whether we be ready to put our hand to the knife, and flay all fuch evil motions in the birth. If fo, God will fav

<sup>\*</sup> Psalm exxxix, 20.04. Old translation.

fay of us, as he did of Abraham, 'Now I know that thou fearest me, seeing thou hast not withholden from me thy most beloved inclinations.' O that sinners would but cast their eyes on their hearts one hour, and see what evil motions prevail within them in so short a space! they would find at once that they knew not the sear of the Lord.

Thirdly, Hath the fear of offending God made us watchful against all temptations? As much as the fear of offending God possesses our hearts, it must needs be, we shall not willingly run any risques of doing it. And needlessly we run any risk of offending God, when needlessly we run into temptation.-Now hath God nothing to lay to our charge on this score?-Few have at any time fear enough this way; and none have been always enough watchful against temptations. Some indeed court sin, run wilfully into temptation, because they love fin, else certain places would not be frequented as they are: and where then, in fuch persons, is there any fear of offending God? What? Doth the drunkard fear offending God, when he runs wilfully to the alehouse; or the lewd person, when he betakes himfelf to the brothel? Is there any fear of God in the heart of him, who will be a companion of those who fear him not? This hath been, and is the case of too many of you. And of whom, in some degree, hath it not been the case not to fear temptations : - Alas! the more we search our hearts and ways, the more abundantly we find the multitude of our fins increasing upon us. But,

Fourthly, Hath a holy fear of God kept us from dishonouring him in the use of any of his good creatures? This is a peculiar branch of religious fear; and is what is meant by doing all things in the fear of God. And it is the more to be noted, because in things allowed, we are most apt to be off our guard. It is to no end I should ask careless persons, if they have not been without this fear, since they always are so, and know not the difference between the use and abuse of an allowed thing; asking only if there be any harm in it, while they make it ignorantly harm to themselves by their abuse of it. But to more serious persons I observe, there is not one of the necessaries or comforts of life which we shall not sinfully abuse, unless we use it in the fear of God. Our sleep, refreshments of meat and drink, our time, our friends, our

books, our children our every thing, is capable of finful abuse. by being used to indulgence; not in the fear, and to the glory of God, but to self-pleasing, and to the hindrance of necessary duties. I beseech you all to bring yourselves under examination upon this point. You will all find plenteous matter of humiliation from it. It is a great thing to be able to say, 'I have used this world in the allowable things thereof, 'as not abusing it.'

Thus much of the fear of God. Apply what you have heard, and the Lord give you understanding for Christ Jesus'

fake.

# SERMON XXIX.

### GALATIANS, iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

HAVE fpoken fully of the First Commandment, with a view of shewing you what the law saith, and expects, and that, unable to answer its expectations, we might humble ourselves. and betake us to Christ. And now I will enter upon the Second Commandment with the same design.

The First Commandment enjoins a practical knowledge of God, or giving the heart to him in the dispositions thereof.—And this is the life and substance of all the following commandments, which are only kept, in proportion with the devotedness of heart to God, which there is in keeping them. More particularly, we can only worship God, as our hearts are acquainted with a love and fear of him, and trust in him. Without something of this, all worship can be but formality; we can neither pray, nor hear, nor wait on God in the sacraments, with any spirituality; so these must be lifeless services, unprofitable to us, and not honourable to God.

This Second Commandment requires us to worship God. And the worship of God must be according to God's revealed will. Now the scripture requires we should worship God in a reverent use of prayer, the word, and the sacraments.

At prefent, I will speak of the Sacraments, reserving the other two for another occasion. And these are two, Buptism, and the Lord's Supper; concerning which, I will only suggest some needful inquiries respecting the use we have made of them, and those such as I hope may be of service to such of you as are now to approach the Lord's table.

Let

Let it be remarked once for all, that there are four things

needful to a right performance of religious worship.

First, Sincerity, from a simple desire to please God in our worship, because he requires it at our hands, as a means of our honouring him, and profiting ourselves.

Secondly, Diligence, which is an earnest striving to stir up, and maintain the graces which are requisite to worship, and

to profit by it.

Thirdly, Faith, which is a believing that God will accept

us in our worship for Christ's sake, and bless it to us.

Fourthly, Reverence, which is a due impression of the majesty of that God with whom we transact. Let us see for the present how far we have walked in these rules, concerning

Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

First, With regard to Baptism, how this sacrament is the instrument of admission into Christ's family, by which the baptised person becomes entitled to the gospel benefits, and voluntarily engages for gospel duties, namely, that mortification of fin, and holy living, which are represented by washing the body with water, and which St. Peter calls ' the anfwer of a good conscience before God.\* See, then, since we came to years of discretion, have we been sincere and true to our baptism? Did we, immediately on coming to those years, claim the benefits it gave us a right to, and discharge the engagements it laid us under? Who will fay this of himfelf! Who will fay from the hour he was capable of it, he has always respected himself as a child of God's family, valued as he ought the relation, and faithfully hath walked as a dutiful child of his heavenly Father? Will you venture to fay, you have been thus fincere with God in his covenant, at no time starting from it? Or are you now sincere? Alas, how many are unfaithful not claiming their privileges, and difregarding their duties? In whom fin even now reigneth, and to this day unwashed from their iniquity! to fincerity, let me add an inquiry about your diligence in this baptismal transaction. Have we been diligent to make our calling fure? Diligent in feeking the grace of God diligent in stirring up the grace that is in us. diligent in the use of all instituted means; diligent in hving to God, in mortifying, and dying to fin; in short,

diligent before all things, and as we ought in our spiritual and covenant work? Also, have you been believing, that is to fay, trusting with all confidence on God's faithfulness, to make good whatever was promifed and engaged for to you. when you were baptized into the facred Trinity? Have you not rather regarded your baptism as a matter of form, with which you had little concern; or negligently undervalued and forgotten the privileges you were admitted to in baptifm; or at best, not failed often and much in claiming those spiritual bleffings in time of need, which God had fo kindly engaged himself by that institution to make good to you? To speak the truth, we have almost lost fight of those both benefits and engagements which this divine ordinance feals between God and us: baptism stands for a mere cypher, I may ask, Who hath any reverence for it? or where is it shewn? Is there any thing of that facred reverence which is due to a divine institution, shewn when we bring our children to it? From one end to the other, do we treat it as a facrament? Is not the chief care, to procure sponsors who may be able to bear an extravagant and needless expence, and then to entertain them in such fort, as to say the least, doth very ill become the devoting a child to God's fervice, and that absolute renunciation made in the child's name, ' of the pomp and vanity of the world, together with the carnal defires of the flesh. fo as not to follow or be led by them?' Is there not much cause to fear, that on such occasions we forget the vows which are on ourselves; and do but little act the baptismal covenant in our own persons, when we bring others to it, and folemnly pledge our care for their godly education in it Or is this the only time when we do not reverence our baptismal engagements and privileges? It is a faving among the Turks, What, a musselman, that is a professed servant of Mahoe met, to do this!' and it hath been a fufficient answer of old. in time of temptation, 'I am baptised.' But what regard have we in general to our baptism? It is renounced every day by the neglect of the most that have been sealed with it, who live in an utter contradiction to it, flighting God's ways, and keeping in with the world and the flesh, so serving the devil. And I would God any of us had been without blame on this score. But, Secondly,

Secondly, With regard to the Lord's Supper. Now this I hope, you are fensible is such a remembrance of the death of Christ, as that while therein we receive him to us, we renewedly, by that receiving, furrender ourselves to him as his disciples, in a living union with him, and in a loving fellowthip with one another. Now if the design of this institution be to feal Christ to believers, as an all-sufficient Saviour, and them to Christ as loval servants and faithful disciples and believers, one to another, as fellow-members and fellow-fervants: if fuch be the communion of faints with Christ and one another, by a folemn institution of our Lord's own appointment for the purpose, it will be seasonable to ask, in view to the approaching ordinance, and I leave you to make application for the time past. Firth, Are you fincere herein? That is to fay, are you truly defirous that Christ alone be your Saviour, because you find an utter insufficiency in yourself, and an all-fufficiency in him to help you in every need of your foul, whether respecting your guilt, or the sentence of the law, or the power of corruption, or the force of temptation, or the deceitfulness of your own heart, or the vigilance and artifice of the devil, or the work you have to do, or the shortness of your life, or the approach of death and judgment: for any, or all of these things do you defire sincerely help from Christ, giving glory to him as alone able and mighty to fave you; and faying with Peter, Lord, to ruhom should I go, thou hast the words of eternal life? And I know, and am sure, that thou art that Christ, the son of the living God.\* Also are you fincere in this, in determining that Christ alone shall be your mafter? Doth he who knoweth all things, even the fecrets of your heart, read there the unfeigned characters of loyalty for his fervice, and zeal for his honour and interests? That loathing and exceedingly ashamed of yourself for your past unfaithfulness, you are come now to him with an honest and true heart, earnestly hoping, and stedfastly purposing by his grace, that never more you will be ashamed of him, or deny him, or betray him, or fell him for interest or reputation, or friends, or life?—Can you fay also with truth, from the bottom of your heart, that you are ready to all offices of love towards Christ's members, and your fellow-members? Can you chearfully

fully eat this one bread, and drink of the same cup, in token of your brotherly affection; and as your pledge that you will gladly do all in your power to promote their greatest interests; and that you are ready to receive all their kind assistance for

the edification of your own foul?

Secondly, To fincerity have you added diligence in this matter: Are you come prepared? Have you examined and judged yourself, that you might not be judged of the Lord . Is Christ precious to your soul? Do you long to taste of his goodness? Are you come with an hungering appetite to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man; diligently having fought out your wants and his fulness? Is your defire keen after his pardoning, quickening, and comforting grace? Have you been diligent, too, in trying your ways, in lamenting your iniquities before him whom you have pierced; in stirring up all your graces, and putting on the wedding garment? -Have you beheld the man, till you have mourned, till you have believed, till you have loved him? Have you thought of all the wonders he hath done for you, how he hath plucked you from the hands of the enemy, and led you, and taught you to go, and kept you from falling, and lifted you up when you were down, and to this day with almighty power and care delivered you? Of the wonders he hath yet to do for you, have you been mindful, wonders in grace and glory? Have you meditated on all his kindness, till your heart, big with praise and thankfulness, is impatient to come before him in this not the least testimony of his love; to come and tell him of his wondrous doings, and to devote yourself, your whole self, soul, body, and spirit, to him, as a too little return for his wonderful love? And would you think it worse than death ever any more to part from him, to deny or difgrace him? But more, have you been diligent that your love of Christ might be enlarged to all his people? Have you been earnestly seeking that all prejudices might be done away, and to have your heart taught the gracious tenderness of a Christ-like affection, so that you can fay, 'You love not in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth,'\* and truft that Christ shall own you by this mark to be his disciple.

Thirdly, Are you come also in faith? Have you considered

attentively who hath spread the table; and what are the provisions which are set before you? Do you see Christ under these signs of bread and wine; and are you come to feed your heart and eyes in this representation of the dying love of Jefus? You have weighed his own words, 'This is my body which was given for you; and this is my blood of the New Testament which was shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins.' And what, do you verily believe it shall even be so as he hath said? Only believe, and the thing is done. Faith discovers a crucified Jesus in the representation here made of him, faith makes the promife a living word, and feeds on the body and blood of Christ in the power of the promise; faith looks to Jesus at the right hand of God, is assured of his power to fulfil his engagements and of his faithfulness to his promises, and draws out of him a feast indeed, to the establishment and refreshing of the foul. Are you believing therefore? In spite of all your manifold past iniquities, in fpite of all your infirmities and spiritual poverty, in spite of whatever trials and discouraging appearances, do you believe that there shall be an accomplishment of the things which have been spoken? This is to deal with Christ, as a faithful and powerful High Priest, and to enter into the heart of his defign in leaving behind him this pledge of his love, this affurance of his care and protection till he come. Yet,

Fourthly, Are you come with reverence? Amidst all the triumphs of your faith, are you mindful who you are, and with whom you are to transact? That you yourself are a vile sinner, coming to fit down at your Master's table, who is also the most high God? The thought indeed ought not to terrify you, but it ought to awe you. Have you therefore been fo mindful of your fins, and so abased in your own eyes, that you could not think of drawing near, but in the merit of your Lord, and upon his express invitation and command? And, when even thus you are emboldened to approach, are you impressed with a deep sense of your vileness, of your unworthiness of so high an honour, and covered with shame, while you are admitted to so near an approach? Believe it, my friends, the highest archangels rejoice to minister under him with whom you are about to feast. You must needs then be humble when you come near to his Majesty. You must needs ad-

No. 4. s mire

mire and adore, and be full of lowly reverence of his prefence, while he thus condefcends to us finful dust and ashes.

The thoughts I have now suggested to you, may well add to your godly fear and reverence; while you cannot but have resected how far short you have come in all these things, or at least in suffilling your sacramental engagements, on sormer occasions. Who can say, with all this sincerity and diligence, and faith, and reverence, I have always attended on the Lord at his table? Let the thought of former miscarriages still more humble and abase you; let it also increase your fear and watchfulness. And O that others, who have neglected or profaned this high and holy ordinance, may be seasonably brought to a fense of their guilt with regard to this important branch of Christian worship!

### SERMON XXX.

#### GALATIANS iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

THILE we are proving ourselves by the law, the holy, just, and good law of God, bringing our hearts and ways under examination by one and another of the divine commandments, do not our fins observeably increase upon us, our guilt grow up to a mountainous fize, and are we not constrained to cry out with David, 'My iniquities are more in number than the hairs of my head?' But brethren, do we and can we also sincerely say with him, on the review, 'My heart hath failed me; O Lord, let it be thy pleasure to de-'liver me: make hafte, O Lord, to help me?' Are we loathing ourselves for our abominations, doth shame cover our faces, and our hearts failing us, are we crying mightily to our God, that for his mercy's fake in Jesus Christ he will have mercy upon us? Have we thus improved the word we have already heard, and profited by the inquiries which we have hitherto been making after our fins? If not, what are we doing other than adding fin unto fin? Why do we fuffer the devil to catch away the word from our hearts as foon as we have heard it? In truth, this is too generally the case among you. You come and fit here as God's people, you hear what is faid to you, you plainly perceive that the matter we treat is of the last importance to your fouls: but when this is done, where are the fruits? O that fuch fruits were found among us as God doth most certainly and most reasonably expect! you ought to have been long ago a humble, believing, heavenly

people, full of love to God, and to one another. But is this the case? Hath not God cause to say of us, my brethren, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainfaying people?\* They will not hear, they will not regard; I have shewn them their filthiness in the glass of my law, but they go away and forget what manner of men they are; they go away and forget all that I have faid to them, they do not meditate thereupon, they do not commune with their own hearts in their chambers, digesting the bread I have given them to eat; they forget all that I have spoken, one losing it in care, and another in pleasure, and another in indulgence, and another in floth - every one in pursuit of the particular lust of his heart. Yet my word shall not return unto me void.† I beseech you, brethren, is not the word God's? You know it is. And is not the ministry of it God's own appointment? You know we are no less than ambassa. dors for God, and his messengers to you. And is not the day God's; and the house God's; and the people, do you not, by your coming hither, profess yourselves to belong to God? I befeech you, after all, how will you answer it to God, that you remain still so idle, that you hear and do not, that you hear and use no endeavour to do, forgetting as foon as you have heard? O that you would duly confider the aweful declaration, 'That the word of the Lord shall not return unto him void:' that the word you hear in this house is a bleffing or a curse to your souls, is life or death to you as vourselves improve or difregard it! But to draw nearer the point.

Our conduct is under examination respecting the second commandment. And this commandment was said to injoin upon us the worship of God in a due use of prayer, the word and the sacraments. As the occasion then required it, I spake of the sacraments the last Lord's day. And now I am to consider prayer and the word, with a view of bringing your conduct under inquiry, and so of suggesting cause of humiliation,

and of application to the blood of Jesus for mercy.

You will remember that four things were faid to be requifite in order to a religious discharge of every part of divine worship, that it might be so done as to glorify God and profit us. These were sincerity, diligence, faith and reverence.

We will apply these to the word and prayer. And,

First, Have we been sincere in the use of God's word? there is a generation, who defire not the knowledge of God's ways \*, and therefore care not to come to the light, lest their deeds should be reproved\*; or if they do come to inquire at the mouth of the Lord, it is hypocritically, not with an honest heart and single eve; fimply defiring to know what the will of the Lord is, though it should be never so much against their own inclinations; but like wicked Ahab wanting the word of the Lord to fpeak good concerning their case and not evil; that is, wanting to have the word of God on their fide, and that merely for this wretched end, that they may be more fatisfied and eafy in their pernicious ways. Now we know that as Satan can transform himself into an angel of light, so an hypocritical, infincere and deceived heart can make the Scriptures speak the language of hell; because it is wished they might correspond with the prejudice or inclination of the heart, it is easy to believe they do. Wherefore in the hearing or reading of God's word, have you never had your prejudices; did you never want the scripture to be of your humour or opinion, coming thereto with preconceived notions, and fo more apt to warp and diffort its meaning, than fairly to be judged by it? There is more of this infincerity in the world than is thought of: and this is the reason why men of all persuasions do think the scriptures speak on their fide. They come with prejudice, and fo longing to find fomewhat which may favour their way, they eafily do fo, catching at every word which may feem to fuit their purpose. The remedy for this is not a popish infallible interpreter, but a simplicity and true honesty of heart. But say if you have not brought your prejudices with you against God's word? Have you never, in or after hearing, had your difgusts against it? Have you always hearkened to it with a childlike teachableness and meekness, or rather instead of humbly and thankfully applying all to yourfelf, have you not been unwilling to hear its declarations; and its judgments, because they were so fevere; its precepts, because they are so spiritual; its prohibitions, because they are so self-denying; its means, because so opposite to flesh and blood? Whence is it otherwise, that

that so many of you have been wanting me to prophely to you smooth things, and complaining of me, that I am often hard and terrifying, and carrying things too far, when nevertheless, you all know in your consciences, I speak to you but what God speaketh in his word? In short, as new born babes, have ye desired the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby. As a child doth the breast, have you always loved, and always desired the word, always received it when offered you, always fed upon it, and made it the whole nourishment of your soul? Your diligence in the use of it, may best shew you your sincerity, and therefore I ask,

Secondly, Have you been deligent in the use of God's word? Have you been diligent to hear it publicly ministered?-Hath your place been never vacant in the church? or when vacant, was it always an absolute necessity, so as that you can appeal to God you did not come for this only reason, because you could not, or at least, because you were satisfied in your conscience it was his will in your circumstances you should not? Have you been diligent to read it in private? -Hath your bible at no time lain by, covered with dust? or is it not the case with you perhaps that you have never yet provided to have fuch a book in your house? Was this because of your poverty? What, all your life fo poor? Have you never fquandered more than this would amount to; or even in the most necessitous case, would you not beg if you were never able to buy! — Or fay you could not read; have you been diligent to meditate on what you have heard therefrom? You could think: have you thought on God's word? this is required of all, whether readers or not readers: have you endeavoured always to hide it in your heart? All the day long hath your study been in it? Have you made it your delight and your counfellor?-God's command concerning the scriptures, 'You shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou fittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way; when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.+ It means plainly, that the scriptures must be the matter of our ordinary conversation. Before the business of the day begins, and when it is ended, when we fit at our tables, and when we walk abroad, our conversation must be from the word of

God. This might you all do, whether learned or unlearned; but this have you done, or do you? Are your children, your family, your houses, your tables, your walks, witnesses for you herein? Alas, it is greatly to be feared the word of God is more in the mouths of some to jest upon it, than of others to speak of it with honour. Indeed we are ashamed of so unfashionable a thing. And while it is banished our familiar discourses, our souls suffer abundantly from the idle, vain, trifling, infignificant matters we entertain one another with in our friendly intercourses. But have you been diligent to use the word as to profit by it? Have you made diligent preparation for fuch use of it, by praying for a meek and understanding heart, that you might be able both to know and receive the will of God concerning you? Have you been diligent to apply it to yourfelf, rather than others, when you have been hearing or reading it, always laying home to your own foul the doctrines, reproofs, corrections, and instructions it hath fpoken to you? And have you also been diligent to do what you have been taught, carefully keeping the word in your heart, and recalling it for use by recollection and prayer? To talk over the fermon one with another, and to communicate their feveral experiences relating to it, was a good old custom among Christians. Have you defired or endeavoured to do this? or rather, have you not too often carelessly forgotten, as foon as you were gone from church, whatever was faid to you? And how could it be otherwise, when you would pass your Sunday evenings in visits one with another; and when in them you would speak your own words on the subbath day.\*-To speak freely, I never expect to see that person religious indeed, who continues in this practice, and thereby breaks at least two commandments at once, as soon as departed from the house of God, the fourth, by an abuse of the sabbath, the fecond, by a careless and wilful forgetfulness of the word spoken. I fay then once more, have we used the word with diligence, or have we not all been fadly negligent to read, to hear, to speak of, to improve it? And to what shall we ascribe this, but to want of fincere love of it? Let us take shame to ourselves before God, that while we have been so desirous to hear or read, or talk of any matter of pleasure, we should have

been fo backward to God's word; and been amusing ourselves with that which doth not profit, while we have been neglecting what alone can make us wife unto salvation!

I hirdly, Have we used the Scriptures in Faith? There is ground enough for believing the Scriptures to be the word of God; but yet to believe them fuch with the heart is no flight matter: indeed there is no doing it of ourselves, for this faith is the gift of God. To use the Scriptures in faith, is not only to receive every and any part of them with fuitable temper and disposition of spirit, but especially it is to have all the great points of them lying on the heart; to entertain in the heart the threatenings and curses of God against sin, with an humble acknowledgement and awful adoration of their reality and justice; to entertain the promises with persuasion of their truth, fatisfiedness in their fulness, and content that they shall furely be accomplished; to entertain the precepts with delight as being holy, just and good; to entertain the prohibitions with willingness and readiness; and to entertain the means prescribed with defire and thankfulness. And have we thus received the word? Sinners, fee you not that God's curse against you for your sins hath never humbled your hearts; that you do not take one of his promifes relating to this or another life into your hearts, so as to rest upon and be influenced by it; that heartily and from the bottom of your fouls you hate all which God bids you do, and with full choice love and follow what he forbids you; that you experience no defire after the means God affords us, and use them with a most wicked indifference? And where then is your faith in God's word? Believers, have God's threatenings awed you as they ought now and always, and his promifes encouraged you; hath what he bid been received with chearful delight, and what he forbad been forfaken with utter detestation; or have youalways used the means with defire and thankfulness? have you used the word in faith? Though you believe, have you no cause to say, Lord, help mine unbelief? Put yourselves to the trial, hath faith enlivened the word in your hearts whenever you heard it? Whence then, hath the hearing of God's terrors drove you no faster from the wrath to come, or the declarations which you have had made to you so often of God's mercies, allured you no more to Jesus? Whence is the law of God so little tranfcribed into your hearts, and the law of fin fo little mortified there?

there? May not Christ well complain of us, ? faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you \*? One and all of us, we have great cause of humiliation for our little faith in God's word. And, be it remembered, that nothing more dishonours God than this, seeing not to believe his word is to make him a liar; to suppose him unfaithful, to suspect him weak or unchangeable or mistaken Alas, who can know the depth of that mystery of iniquity, the heart of man, when so

much fin is implied in only one word? But,

Fourthly, Have we used God's word with reverence? Brethren, in all reason we should approach God's word as if we heard God speaking to us. For the word is God's revealed will, the declaration of God's mind to us and concerning us. The difference is not fo much whether the instrument he uses be the voice of a man, or the voice of an angel; the thing to be regarded is that what we hear or read is the declaration of God's mind to us. And I will leave you to judge in what manner we ought to attend upon God revealing his mind to us. Only consider that he is the glorious eternal almighty Majesty of heaven and earth and we dust, ashes, sinners; and you will eafily perceive that with our faces on the earth, with the deepest prostration of spirit, struck into awe and reverence, we ought to attend the manifestations of his mind. But now, are you not already confounded in the recollection of that little reverence, wherewith you have to often attended on the most high God speaking to you? How wandering, cold and inattentive you have been! how lightly you have regarded! how heedlefsly you have approached! how fuddenly you have forgotten! the ministry is God's especial way of speaking. thought which should make the preacher and the audience both to tremble, lest either should profane the word of God. And is it fit that God opening himself by the mouth of his mesfengers should be heard with curiosity, with critical remarks only on the abilities of the preacher, with contention against his declarations, with an insulting indifference, with a horrid flight, disdain, and a licentious air of disregard? Is it fit that messages from heaven should be received with that irreverence they too often are? Attention is not enough, there must be reverence; reverence not of the man,

but of the word; of the word as coming from the most high God. I beg you to confider if you have thus heard; to fee whether your irreverence hath not been a fignal cause of your little profiting by what that word of the inspired preacher meaneth, Keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to offer the sacrifice of fools; for they know not that they do evil\* .- And thus much concerning the use of the Word.

II. I would fpeak a few words concerning the use we have made of Prayer. And they will be but a few, because what hath been faid concerning the word may be so easily applied to this matter of prayer. Yet I ask,

First. Have you been sincere in your approaches to the throne of grace? Sincerity in prayer is an unfeigned defire of God's granting what we ask. But I fear there is much seeming prayer where there is little unfeigned defire. Did you never ask for a contrite heart and full of godly forrow for your fins; or for a new heart and new spirit; or for faith and love and other graces; or for God's bleffing on the church; or for the conversion of sinners; or for the establishment of faints; or in short for many other things which have been the matter of your prayers (if not elsewhere, yet in this house at least) when at the bottom you really defired none of these things; or when your defire of them was fo very weak that you could hardly call it fincere?

Secondly, Have we been diligent in prayer? Diligence implies that we are constant at our work, and busy while we are in it. How have you been constant in prayer? This you ought .-Continue instant in prayer, and pray without ceasing\*, are scripture injunctions. But some pray not at all. Perhaps they are more than may be thought of. Truly I flick not to put in the number all fuch as pray not in fecret, though they appear in the congregation. That they may do and never pray, unless an unmeaning repetition of words should be called prayer.— And if they had any thing more, any the least grain of the spirit of prayer and supplication, it would bring them on their knees in private as well as public. And others, are they as constant as they should? (let the question be put to any of you all)

<sup>\*</sup> Eccles. v. 1. \* Rom, xii. 12,-1 Thess. y. 17.

all) Have you been always conftant? At no time have you needlessly neglected, or causelessly been diverted from it? And when you have been thus employed, have you been always busy, your heart in your work, and all your strength employed upon it? Whoever prays indeed shall often find it no easy work. There shall need much wrestling, wrestling with the slesh, wrestling with the world, wrestling with Satan. And what, have you always wrestled, and always vanquished? Whoever you are, I am sure you are crying out, "Lord, forgive

me the iniquity of my holy things."

Thirdly, Have you also prayed in Faith? Now it is the very nature of fuch prayer to cast all manner of care and every burden on the Lord; guilt, corcuption, trial, temptation whatever it be, to come and lay it all upon Christ: and this with a certain confidence in him; which both doth him the highest honour, and makes him best pleased with us. It charges Christ with all, and leaves every thing with him. It fays, 'Lord, here are all these sins that I have done; here are all these temptations I have to struggle with; here are all these corruptions to subdue; here is all this work to be performed; and I am a poor helpless thing: behold I lay it all upon thee, and leave it all and every part of it with thee. And I know that thou canst, thou hast told me thou wilt, take care of the whole.-It is thy office to do fo, and thou delighteft to do it : Lord, I cast all my care on thee." There is no other boldness in this than what the promifes of God encourage and give fanction to. Such is the very prayer of faith. And I must leave yourselves to judge how far you have approached the throne in this spirit.

Fourthly, Have you prayed with reverence? What, always? and with all due reverence? as speaking to God? You know how great a reverence, how prosound a humility becomes you a creature and a sinner, when you approach the great God.—But hath this attended you in all your approaches? Whence then is it that some are sitting on their seats? That others are unconcernedly gazing about while prayers are here offering up? Is this reverence? I do not say that wandering thoughts lamented and contended with, shall render prayers to the most merciful God, offered up in Christ's name, of no account: but you must needs see that such thoughts argue a want of due reverence. And which of you hath had such an abiding and awful reverence of the majetry and presence of that God with whom he hath been transacting in prayer, as to be altogether

free of them? And may not this have been owing to an hasty and unprepared rushing into God's presence? And then what should that convince of, but that we were not solemnly enough impressed with that awful intercourse we were about to hold with God?

Let these hints serve relating to prayer. And let the whole convince you how exceedingly you have transgressed this second commandment, which regards the instituted methods of wor-

shipping God in the word, prayer and the facraments.

Add the inquiries which have been made from the fecond commandment to those which were made from the first, and then say if you have not abundant need of a righteousness better than your own, and how' justly the Apostle says in the Text, that the law is a schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. I shall be greatly rejoiced, if these considerations drive any of you to him, or nearer to him. And much need there is they should drive us all to him, when we remember that otherwise the curse of the law abideth on us.

But remember, my Brethren, if you will go favingly to Chrift, it must be in a way of true humiliation; lothing yourselves, ashamed, forry, and greatly humbled for all your transgressions against God's majesty. Remember that Christ did not come to be a minister of sin. God forbid. But he came to give us encouragement, and to give us power to repent. And how much greater will our damnation be, if to our transgressions of God's Law we add so horrid an abuse of the gospel, as from Christ's coming to save us, to take liberty of continuing in sin?

I dismiss the subject for the present, determining to resume it again, if God permit, at the return of this season. But truly that is a great way off: and who can say that either you or I shall live to see it? Certainly many of us shall not. If it shall please God to take me in the mean time, what you have already heard will be his witness against you, and you must see to it that you be ready to give a faithful account of the improvement you have made of it at the day of judgement; where we shall assuredly all meet again; and where it shall be my joy and my crown, as it is my most earnest prayer, to see you every one at the right hand of the Judge, and hear that soul-ravishing sentence of acquittal and glory pronounced over you all, 'Come' ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' Even so, Lord Jesus, for thy name's sake! Amen, Amen.

### SERMON XXXI.

### GALATIANS iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

THE design of Lent is for the more express humiliation and mourning for sin. We must come to Christ as men cast away, and glad by any means to be faved from perishing. How doth the finfulness and misery of our lost estate appear? The text tells us, by the law. The law is our schoolmaster, by holding up to us its righteousness and curse, condemns and makes us afraid, and fo drives us to Christ. It is the contemplation of the law therefore must abase us; and this abasement causing us to draw near to Jesus for pardon, we learn from the love of God, manifested to us in the satisfaction and atonement made for fin, to lothe ourselves for it, and lament and forfake it. To open therefore the law as a rule of duty, and that in a way of inquiry, that therein as in a glass we might fee our own deformity, was thought a proper employment at this feafon the last year. Then it was proposed to go over the Ten Commandments in this view; to go as far therein only as the Sundays of Lent gave opportunity; and, should God give me life and continuance among you, to refume what remained the next (that is now, the present) Lent.-While I am speaking this, the thought of God's having spared me, and the most of those who then heard me, this year, also forces itself upon me, and fuggests to me to ask myself and you, what fruit we can show for so long a time, and for so many opportunities as we have enjoyed in it? Are we grown stronger in faith, hope, defire after God and glory? What fins have been renounced, and lusts mortified? Have we been more active and zeal-

ous in our Master's service; and what have we attempted for his honour and interests, and for the falvation of others? Let us look back and take shame to ourselves we have so little profited. Yea, but are we not rather farther from God than a year ago? Have we not lost ground? Do we not see less of our fins, and feel less for our foul; and feek less after Christ? Are not our eyes closing? Or perhaps we have thought nothing about this needful thing, and just even as we were, infensible and careless! Is it not so with some of you? Are twelve other months gone over your heads just like the former? In these, as in them, have you been adding fin to fin? As if your guilt were not great and heavy enough before, have you been filling up the measure of it every day of all this time? If this be the case with any of you, I know not what to say to it. I wish I could fay any thing that might do you fervice. I will fay this: Will you come to a refolution that you will not meddle with religion; that you will go on, live and die in your old way, and stand by the consequence? I would have you try to bring yourfelf to this resolution. Deliberately and positively determine once for all, that you will never have any thing to do with Christ. Come, resolve upon it, that you will not forfake your old way, as long as you live. Why it is but to lose heaven and perish for ever. Resolve, I say, distinctly and fully, that you will never meddle with religion It is as good refolve as do it. Well then, are you determined? No. Satan has never yet pushed you to this point, nor never will. He knows, he shall fucceed more effectually by putting you on delay. Satan will not, then I will still more and more press you to try if you cannot come to this resolution. Doubtless if you can but once be coolly and deliberately resolved that you will have nothing to do with God, and godliness, and glory, and will never mind any thing but the world, it will prefently make your life easy, you will eat, drink and be merry; you will eat and drink, for to morrow you die\*. What profits it to halt between two opinions? you do not like Christ? Why not then refolve you will never have any thing to do with him; you fee my meaning; you are in fact and continuedly doing that you dare not resolve to do. The past years prove it, and the present hath not produced nor is likely to produce any thing to the contrary. What use shall we make now of past experience? Shall we

not

not humble our fouls? And shall not what lies so immediately behind and before quicken us to do so? Let us proceed then in the work proposed. The two first commandments have been already opened and applied in the method designed. Proceed we now to the

Third Commandment, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain; The name of the Lord; though it fignify properly and strictly any of his titles, such as lehovah, Lord, God; yet inasmuch as names only serve to distinguish persons, we must understand hereby God himself, his Majesty, Being and Perfections. Thou shalt not take his name, that is, thou shalt not touch and meddle with God, or any thing whereby he is known as perfons are by their names. Thou shalt not touch and meddle therewith in vain, in a vain manner, for no caufe, and upon light occasion. The fense of the Commandment is this; 'We must not in our ordinary conduct and conversation behave ourselves dishonourably to that God whom we folemnly take to be our God, according to the first Commandment, and whom we profess to be our God by the public worship we pay him, according to the second: but our whole conduct and conversation in the world, must be such as 6 doth reverently fet forth and tend to promote his glory." In, short, in word and deed, we must behave in such manner as shall be to the glory of God's name, when we do not fay and do every thing, which may promote God's honour, as well as when we fay or do any thing contrary to his honour, we are guilty of taking his name in vain. Let us come therefore to inquiry under these two heads, whether in word, or conduct we have taken God's name in vain. And,

. I. In word. Has our conversation been always such, as that therein there was never any thing dishonourable to his glory,

and always every thing fuited to do him honour?

First, Has there been nothing dishonourable to God upon our lips? The Apostle St James saith, The tongue is a world of iniquity, an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Let us look into the use we have made of this member.—Have we profaned God's name, taking it in our mouths lightly, irreverently, and without design of doing him honour? This is the manner of too many to abuse that sacred name in horrid imprecations and curses and appeals to God, in every and no cause; as it is also

the manner of many more to use familiarly God's name in almost every fentence they speak: and in the mean time both are ready with excuse, the one is provoked or does it inconsiderately, the other infifts there is no great harm in it; how truly, let this third Commandment determine.—Have you never treated irreligiously God's Word, and the truth it contains? And this, whether by disputing against what it faith, or by indecently using the expressions of it? It is the way of some to dispute against what, for manifest reasons, they care not to believe; and of others, with as great ill manners as ungodlinefs, to clothe their idle jests over a glass in scripture language.-Have you never spoken lightly of God's ordinances, his day, sacraments and other parts of his worship, and especially the preaching of the word, wherein we are most apt to offend, because it comes to us through the hands of men? But it must be remembered that as the word is God's, so is the ministration of it God's ordinance. And therefore Christ saith, He that despiseth you, despiseth me \*. To speak against what a minister saith from God's word, is not to speak against the man, but directly against God +: and to speak against the free enforcements, exhortations and applications he makes of God's Word, is directly to speak against the faithful execution of God's ordinance. -Have you never spoken rashly of God's people? too hastily judging and censuring them; too readily receiving and propagating evil reports concerning them; running them down for their infirmities, and giving a malicious turn to their graces; and fo miscalling the profession of Christ and his words by the odious name of hypocrify, as to discourage and discountenance it; — Have you never spoken disrespectfully of God's providence and grace? In the day of diffress, curfing the day you were born t, and complaining with Cain, that your punishment was more than you could bear &, contending that none was ever visited as you! And in the day of your prosperity ascribing all to yourself, saying, in the forbidden language, My power, and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth, or for my righteousness || hath the Lord done such and such things for me?—Have you never spoken dishonourably of

<sup>\*</sup> Luke x. 16. § Gen. iv. 13. † See 1 Thess. iv. 8 || Deut. viii. 17.—ix. 4. ‡ Job iii. 1,—3.

God's promifes? Faith brings glory to God, when our expressions are full of considence in his care and protection according to his word Perhaps there is hardly a greater instance of this than in that of Job, Though he flay me, yet will I put my trust in him.\* Whereas, when we are crying out, Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore \*? we bring disrepute on his faithfulness and truth in the face of those that hear us. From such circumstances as these we may see if we have not spoken unadvisedly and dishonour-

ably to God with our lips .-- But further,

Seconally, Has our conversation been always not only not dishonourable, but such as in every thing was suited to glorify God? Have we always, as circumstances required, spoken for God? I will speak of thy testimonies, fays the Psalmist, before kings, and will not be ashamed ‡. Hath this been always our case? What, have we never been ashamed, and spoke (to say the most) but by halves, disgracing the truth by not freely and fully declaring it? Have we never spoke more in conformity with the times and the company than we ought?— Yea, but is there not also such a thing as finful filence? a holding the peace altogether even from good? and are we not chargeable with it? I read of Christ, that when himself was reviled, perfecuted, accused, he answered not so much as a word: but when God's truth was in question, or the cause of God dishonoured, then it was, Wo unto you Scribes, wo unto you Pharifees, wo unto you lawyers\*. Just the reverse of what we do, who are warm and contentious for ourselves, and filent for God.—Alas, what day, what hour, what company, doth not convict us of opportunities past by, wherein we might have faid fomething, or fomething more than we did, for God? And to speak now of the general use of the tongue: what has been your general conversation? Has it not often been trifling, infignificant, unprofitable? Who have been your familiar acquaintance? And what has your conversations together usually turned upon? Has it been any thing to the glory of God directly or indirectly? If not, are you guilty or not guilty of opposing the defign of this commandment? Our Lord faith, We shall give account of every idle word at the day of judgement +, that is, of every unprofitable word, which is in-No. 4. confistent

<sup>\*</sup> Job xiii. 15. † Pealm lxxvii, 8.

<sup>‡</sup> Psalm exix. 45. \* Matt. xxiii. 18.

confistent with the character and conduct of a Christian: and then what cause have we every one to cry out, God, be merciful to me a finner! - Also, when we have been speaking of God, have we always done it with all that reverence which became us towards him, fo as to exalt him, and express a lively fense upon our hearts of his being that glorious God we fay he is? When we have spoken of his justice, have our tongues expresfed a becoming dread; when of his holinefs, a becoming shame; when of his grace and love, a becoming gratitude; when of his faithfulness, a becoming confidence; when of his greatness, a becoming humility? Have we as we ought exalted God in his works, his word, his providence, his judgements, his mercies, while we have been speaking of them, whether they regarded the world in general, or ourfelves in particular? Under whatever dispensations we at any time have been, have we made it our endeavour to speak so as to give glory to his justice or mercy or patience, as the case was? In a word, have we in all our conversations exalted God as we ought, confidered as a great and gracious Maker, Redeemer and Sanctifier ?

These hints may serve to show what guilt you may have contracted by taking God's name in vain by word. So I go on

to inquire,

II. Whether in conduct you have not been guilty of taking God's name in vain. And here also we must search again into

the negative and positive side of the question.

First. Negatively: Has there been nothing in your conduct difgraceful and dishonourable to that Jehovah whose servant you profess yourself to be? You may remember what was Nathan's parting word to David, Because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die \*. David's conduct in the matter of Bathsheba had given the enemies of the Lord great handle to speak evil of, and run down the good ways of the Lord. The question is, whether we have not done so likewise. Indeed we all have been guilty, as will appear by a review of our conduct both in our general callings as Christians, and in our special callings in that state of life in which the providence of God hath placed us.

Consider your general calling as Christians, have you done nothing dishonourable to the name of Jesus therein? Looking

back on your past years, can you say, I am pure from the blood of all men\*? My conduct at no time hath strengthened the hands of wickedness, and given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme? Recollect the various periods and pasfages of your life, your younger and your riper years, and places you have lived in, and the persons who have been privy to your conduct, and try if with St, Paul you can appeal to all these things, and say, Ye are witnesses, and God also, how bolily, and justly, and unblameably, I behaved myself among you +? Have you in no instance, at no time, set before the world an example dishonourable to your Lord? What, did you never shew forth any pride, conceit and vanity; any anger, envy, refentment, malice, or evil fpeaking; any conformity with the ways and maxims of the wicked, doing as others, following the multitude, and refusing to be particular? Have neither the honour, esteem or interest of the world ever had undue influence on your conduct? Did the world never see you step into indulgence in meat, drink or apparel? never yielding to floth, idleness and pleasure? at no time trespass the bounds of decency and modesty in word or deed? never giving countenance to the abuse of the Sabbath and God's worship? What, have you never given encouragement to evil, in all places where you have been, and among all the persons with whom you have converfed? Search rather and fee in how many particulars, perhaps for how many years, your conduct has been inconfiftent with and dishonourable to that holy name whereby you are called. Nor shall we need look far back; the traces behind us reach home to the present day in one instance or another. And yet in every instance we must be forced to confess we acted unsuitably with our profession, and took the name of the Lord our God in vain. To fay the truth, careless perfons are always doing fo, their whole lives are a continual taking God's name in vain, and giving occasion with a witness to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. This is an awaking thought. But alas, fuch miscalled Christians regard not how much dishonour they bring on the Lord Jesus, nor how many unhappy fouls they are the instruments of encouraging and forwarding into hell. Yet how deplorable is it, that while the true believer is pierced to the very heart when he takes but one step dishonourable to God, that they should every step be trampling down T 2.

down his glory, and feel no concern for the matter? But to

pass on,

Besides our general, we have all of us a special calling; and it is peculiarly needful we should all enquire, if we have not by our conduct therein dishonoured God's holy name. In the commonwealth, the minister of state, the commander by sea or land, the judge, and every other officer is expected to do nothing hurtful to the honour of the king and the interests of the people; when at any time they do, all, and very reasonably too, are calling for justice. Now we each of us bear a particular office under Christ, and that according to his affignment, whatever our station of life be; while also our misconduct therein doth peculiarly dishonour God, and hurt the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom. I fay we have all our particular calling; let us all examine how we have acted in them. You know what your calling is, for a calling each of you have, though providence may have distinguished some of you by a fortune, which exempts you from those determinate employments, or that more restrained course of life, which others are confined to. You know, I fay, your calling, how then have you acted in it? Have you been feeking to glorify God in it? If not, you have totally abused it, and taken his name in vain. If worldly honour, worldly interest, or carnal gratification, hath been the thing you have been aiming at, you have dishonoured your Lord, and taken God's name in vain. Look back now and fee, hath God no charge against you concerning your special calling? Did you never betray your trust through idleness, sloth, vanity, company-keeping, defire of man's favour? Did you never pervert it to the ends of pride and vain-glory? Has the world never feen any thing in your conduct respecting your calling which has been dishonourable to the Christian name? What, never any compliances for filthy lucre's fake? Never any trimming, or truckling, or diffembling, or flattering? I cannot stop to be more particular. Yourself must see if there have not been many things dishonourable to God's name in your distinct and particular calling; and especially this, whether the world may not have most discernibly seen you were not carrying it on with a fingle defign to glorify God. Now,

Secondly, For the positive side. Have we so conducted ourselves always in our general and special calling, as might most

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tend to glorify God's name? The Scripture is express, Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven\*. Now the inquiry is, have we acted as children of our Father which is in heaven,

zealous always for his glory?

In our general calling, have we been always shining lights? Was the will of God our rule always, and our only rule? Ever concerned to glorify God, have we always conformed to this rule, and so shewn forth our good works before men to God's honour? Have we been always fuch examples of faith and hea-Venlymindedness, hope and charity, meekness and humility, patience and contentedness, diligence and zeal; have we always in fuch manner approved ourselves dead to sin, dead to the world, dead to the esteem, the pleasures, the interests of it, dead to felf-will and felf pleafing, without anger, pride, envy and revenge, and so chaste, modest, temperate, sober; as that in the whole of our conduct God has been glorified in us, and wherever we have been, and whatever we have done, we have Thone as lights unto the world? Who will fay this? None but they who know not what manner of men they are. The humble Christian will smite upon his breast and say, 'Father, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that in all these things I have not glorified thee as I ought. How exceedingly have I failed in that faith, hope and charity, which make thy children a light unto the world, and are the good works which 'men may see and glorify thee for?" Indeed the self-sufficient will pretend a claim, and be rash to cry out almost as Christ did, 'Father, I have glorified thee upon earth,' when alas, they have been feeking nothing but felf-praise and honour from others. While the most have never thought of glorifying God by their conduct, nor can produce so much as one act in their lives undertaken in that view, which should have influenced the whole of them.

Also, in our special callings, have we done all we might for God's glory? Have we been faithful, diligent, laborious, chearful, undaunted, unwearied, upright day after day in our Father's work? Have we always said in our hearts, thus and thus shall God be glorisied, and hath this stirred us up to labour and not to saint? Not to speak of Christ's example, which leaves all so far behind, only compare your conduct in

your calling with that of St Paul in his: and certainly you can affign no reason why you should not have been zealous, active, laborious, ceaseless as he. Make then the comparison, confider the Apostle's conduct and your own, and see if you have been in your conduct the thousandth part of what he was, and what the glory of God required you shall be. Brethren, God hath put a talent into every of our hands, and bid us go and work; whether ministers, magistrates or tradesmen, whether men in authority or inferiors, whether parents or children, masters or fervants, we have all a special calling. Let us look then what we can feverally answer. Will all that have been witnesses of our conduct bear testimony we have not born our calling in vain? To instance only in one instead of all, masters of families, will your children and fervants bear testimony for you, that you have ruled in your house for the glory of God, encouraging godliness, discountenancing vice, worshipping God, and carefully instructing and watching over those committed to your care? Can you call them all together, even each of all that have been under your roof, and will they be your joint and unanimous witneffes that throughout your whole families you have done all you could to glorify God?

By this time the design of this Commandment may be manifest, and that it reaches farther than curfing and swearing, and a light use of God's name. It commands us, not only to own the Lord to be our God, and to own him by the worship we pay him, but to do it in the whole of our conduct in word and deed. And you will eafily fee how all other owning of God is nothing, if this owning him in word and deed be wanting. Confider what you have heard with application. And may the Lord forgive us our fins, and put a new heart in-

to us for Jesus Christ's fake.

### SERMON XXXII.

### GALATIANS, iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

IN laying open the law, with a view to examination and application, I have already fet before you the inward principle required in the first commandment, godlines itself lying in the heart, and also the outward expressions of it injoined by the second and third commandments, both in worship and in the whole of our conduct.

The fourth commandment requires the fanctification of the feventh day to God's glory and our spiritual profit. God's people must keep a weekly holyday, in remembrance of the works of creation and redemption, and in a way of preparation for that rest which remaineth for them in the life to come. So you see the Sabbath is a day not only of rest from worldly labour, but of holiness; and therefore a day of ceasing from worldly labour, that it may be spent in such exercises as tend to fanctification, without which a day of rest would be no other than a day of idleness, and so of sin.

The defign of the Sabbath is two-fold. Principally, that the fervants of the Lord, by ceasing from ordinary employments, and devoting themselves to God's worship on that day, might make a public profession of his name. And subordinately thereto, that by the exercises of public and private worship the fanctification of their souls might be promoted, and they forwarded in the way to their better and everlasting rest. In the former of which views the Sabbath appears calculated for the glory of God in the world; as in the latter it is manifestly an institution given us in great mercy, that we might not be lost in the ceaseless cares of this life, and so forget and

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remain

remain disqualified for the glory that shall be revealed. Now such being the design of the Sabbath, here are three things evidently required in it. in either of which whenever we have failed, we have contracted the guilt of Sabbath-breaking.

I. Here is resting from ordinary employments.

II. Here is a fanctifying that rest.

III. Here is a right aim in such rest and sanctification,

namely, the glory of God and the benefiting our fouls.

Fire, Here is resting from ordinary employments. In it thou shalt do no manner of work. On the Sabbath day nothing of the work of the fix days may be done. Confider now what the work of the fix days is, and you will find in what latitude this resting from ordinary employments is to be understood. In the exercise of our calling, there must be a thinking and contriving of our business; there must be a talking of it, by conferring with others, asking questions of those with whom we are concerned; and giving out directions and orders; and there must be the employment of the body in it. When a man does his work, his thoughts and tongue and hands are engaged in it. Confequently on this day of rest, there must be not only a ceasing from the actual labour of the hands, but neither the tongue nor thoughts may be engaged upon our worldly matters and affairs. So faith Isaiah, If thou wilt honour God on the Sabbath, it must be in not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words\*. Our own words must be forborn, and our own pleafure, and fo of course our own thoughts: for it is plain, words and thoughts of worldly business are as opposite to the fanctifying of the Sabbath as ordinary work is; feeing the foul can no better or more be employed in holy exercises while we are thinking and talking of our worldly things, than if the whole body were engaged in them. Nay rather, such thinking and talking about worldly concerns is more contrary to the fanctification of the Sabbath than labour itself; because thinking and talking of worldly matters doth more peculiarly exclude ferious meditations, than the labour of the hands fingly could do.

Now therefore bring your conduct under examination. Have you rested from contriving, talking about, and doing worldly business on the Lord's day?

Examine what your Sunday thoughts have been. Have

you always in thought and mind been in heaven that day, having left your worldly cares and interests and affairs out of fight behind you? What, have you never been devising how you might contrive some business, or prevent some misfortune, or bring about some project? Has your head never been plodding and working for the world, perhaps in this house? Never meditating how you should meet with this person, and transact with that? Nay, have you never been confulting with yourfelf even beforehand about some business to be negociated on Sunday, and when Sunday was come, revolving it in your mind, and feeling displeased if your scheme did not succeed? Worldly thoughts will indeed of themselves be intruding unfeafonably upon the mind, and demand from all the most resolute refistance; causing the truly humble soul to lament his fad finfulness and weakness: but instead of resisting, did you never indulge them, allowing them for long spaces together to dwell peaceably with you on the hallowed hours of the Sabbath? Say, have you nothing to answer before God for worldly thoughts on the Lord's day?

And then again, have you not spoken your own words on this day? Look back and see if there be no records against you in the book of God of worldly affairs negociated on the Sabbath-day. It is a general, however finful and hurtful practice, to hold worldly conferences, to be settling worldly bargains, and to be giving worldly directions on the Lord's day. Did you never hear of going to this or that church to meet such an one on business? It is a common saying all over the country, I shall see him at church. Or did you never hear of giving orders for the week following, how servants shall be

employed?

Also inquire if you have not done worldly business on the Sabbath-day. You have not perhaps opened your shop; but have you not delivered things out of it? You have not fold your goods, but have you not incroached on the Sabbath by wandering far and near to carry them home? By receiving or paying money, by settling accounts, by transacting business by letter, or by such like ways have you never invaded the sanctification of the Sabbath?—Perhaps you are saying, 'Yes, I have done such things; but what then? these are but trifles; and besides they could not conveniently be avoided."—They are but trifles you say. But trifles as they are, have they not hindered you from making a religious use of the Lord's day; interrupting

interrupting ferious thoughts, and preventing ferious employments? And if so, have they not perverted the holy defign of the Sabbath, with respect both to God's glory and your spiritual benefit? And how then can you call them trifles? - Yea, but still you infift they could not conveniently be avoided. This I deny in general; not one in fifty of them but might just as conveniently have been done another day. If indeed it were of absolute necessity, or the thing of real and particular importance, which could not be prevented by being done before, nor be delayed to another day, though not in the utmost strictness of the word necessary, the matter were otherwise. In such case, to speak my own judgement, though the thing be of a worldly nature, yet the doing it is a duty which supersedes the positive institution of the Sabbath in that instance; for in such cases the rule is, I will have mercy and not facrifice. Now therefore here is the only exception; if it be an act either of absolute neceffity, of real and special moment, and so circumstanced as described, then the Sabbath is not broken. See then, were the worldly things you have done on the Lord's day all of them of necessity, of such particular and pressing importance? (and particular things you know cannot happen often in their very nature, for then they would cease to be particular.) That is the first qualification of worldly things that may or rather ought to be done on the Lord's day, But then, could none of them have been prevented by doing them before, had there been proper care and forefight? That they could not, is the second qualification. And further, might none of them have been put off to another day? The negative to this third qualification. Under this rule, if you will, you may easily bring your conduct respecting worldly affairs on the Sabbath-day under examination. But in coming to a determination, let us diligently remember that we may not take fuch allowances as God has not given us; nor call that a work of importance or necessity which God will reckon licentiousness. Thus much of resting from worldly affairs on the Sabbath. I go on,

Secondly, To help you in the farther inquiry, whether supposing you have rested from worldly affairs, you have also sanctified that rest. To sanctify the Sabbath-day, is to keep it holy. That is the express word of the commandment. Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. And common sense must own that God had some higher design in sorbidding us to work than to

fet

fet us to be idle. Yet I think according to the interpretation which common practice puts on this commandment, the words might run thus, "Remember the Sabbath-day to take "thy pleafure therein." To fay the truth, we have all too much found our own pleafure on this day; as I fear will be but too manifest, while I am proposing to you for examination some hints regarding the fanctification of the Lord's day.

In general therefore, the Sabbath is fanctified when it is fpent with God, in humble and thankful acknowledgements of his love in creating us, and of his infinite mercy in redeeming us by Jesus Christ, who is gone into heaven to prepare a place for us. Then we should be examining our hearts and lives, humbling ourselves for our sins, stirring up the grace in that us, exercifing repentance, faith, hope and charity; above all looking forward to the rest that remaineth for the people of God\*. We should enter into that which is within the vail, whither the forerunner is for us entered +; we must place Jesus on his throne in our heart as an almighty, all fufficient defire, victorious approaching Redeemer; get our fouls warmed into a humble, penitent, believing frame, full of joy, full of glory, full of praise, full of gratitude. We must get up into the mount, and behold the promifed land, till every earthly thing is no longer valued, till inspired with renewed zeal we are ready to fight our way to the promised inheritance, till all the afflictions we have to struggle with are found light in comparison of that exceeding weight of glory we have in our eyes. This is to fanctify the seventh day; this is to remember a risen and exalted Redeemer; this to foretaste the everlasting rest, and to rest from sin. And think you, is not one such day better than a thousand? O what do they lose, who make the fabbath a day of carnal pleasure? Who pass it in wandering, and visiting, and dressing, and every kind of idleness? Who have other defign on the Lord's day than to do nothing? Or who go abroad to the church and elfewhere, to fee to and be feen? Who contrive parties of pleasure, and mutually conspire to forget God? What do these lose? Yea, what guilt, what vengeance do they not incur? Is this to fanctity the Lord's day? Let us consider all of us. The custom of the world can fignify nothing against a commandment of God. Have we kept

<sup>\*</sup> Heb. iv. 9. † Heb. vi. 19, 20.

kept the Sabbath-day holy? Or do we not fee many Sabbaths behind us which were given to pleasure? What did we think of? Was it not pleasure? or talk of, but vain things? or do but what our carnal hearts listed? And let us be assured that Sabbath-idleness is of all idleness the most sinful. To be idle at any time is bad enough; but to be idle, when God so expressly commands us to be employed about him, when his honour is so interested, when it is the very harvest time for heaven and glory! then to be idle, what a fin, what a shame it is! the remembrance of it will cost us bitter tears sooner or later. See then what hath been the use you have made of the Sabbath in general: hath it been fanctified to the Lord, or given to sloth and pleasure?—But more particularly the fanctificacation of this rest lies within the compass of three things.

I. Public exercises.

II. Private exercises.

III. Religious communication.

There is no question to be made but that the whole Sabbath should be taken up in one or another of these employments; and that whenever we step aside from them, unless in the excepted cases before mentioned, we break the fourth commandment.

First, As to public worship. Public worship is the affembling of God's people to his glory, in prayer, praife, hearing the word and communicating. Here therefore, if at any time you have forborn to come to public worship on any unwarrantable cause; if your design in coming hath been any thing else besidetheglorifying of God; if you have not heartily joined with the congregation upon this defign of glorifying God in every part of worship, in prayer and praise, in hearing and communicating; fo far as you have failed herein, you have not duly fanctified the Lord's day in public worship. See then: Did you never absent yourself from God's worship needlessly; as through floth, idleness, business, or for the sake of pleasing company, or because you could do as well at home? Did you always come to public worship with a design to own and honour God? What, did you never come inconfiderately, or out of curiofity, you did not know why, because it was the custom; or because it was a fort of entertainment; it may be to make an appearance, and to be taken notice of for one thing or other? And then again, have you always laboured to join in the feveral parts of worship with attention, reverence

and fuitable affections? To lothe yourfelf while speaking of your fins, and to exalt God's mercy and majesty while singing his praises, hear his holy word with all modesty, meekness and humility, and to wait at his table with becoming fervency and devotion? Say upon the whole, how have you acted your part in public worship? Have you done it to the glory of God? Or have you not sought your own pleasure, whether in absenting from, or, when you have approached unto, the courts of the Lord?

Secondly, Private exercises were faid to be another part of our duty in fanctifying the Lord's day. By these I mean the duties of secret prayer, examination, reading and meditation, in which every Christian ought to be employed alone in certain convenient portions of the Sabbath. Consider then, what answer can you make on this head; what do you say respecting the duties of the closet on the Lord's day? Have they never been neglected, never slighted? The mornings, noons, and evenings of the Sabbaths, how have they been spent? Have you at none of these seasons left your closet to take your pleasure? Perhaps never thought of any thing else you had to do, than to take your pleasure and amuse yourself, as think-

ing Sunday the time for recreation? And so again,

Thirdly, What answer can you make regarding religious communication? In this respect too, have you never spoken your own words on the Lord's day? I wish we may all deeply lay this to heart: for the tongue is an unruly member. Unprofitable conversation is the bane of sanctifying the Sabbath. But I ask, have you not spoken your own words? Let us all impartially judge, and we shall all certainly condemn ourselves in this particular. Yet let us not lie down under the condemnation, but confessing our fin in this respect, and earnestly imploring pardon for Jesus Christ's sake, henceforward take heed to our ways, that we do not thus any longer offend with Confider, my brethren, what has been our conversation in the morning before you have come to this house: has it been about infignificant things? How fad a preparation for public worship! and what have you done at noon? what still vanity? And then in the evening; what, nothing but unprofitable talk, as if on purpose to forget what had been doing at, the church, and to lose the ferious impressions that had been made on the mind? To fay the least, if we cannot converse together upon religious things on the Lord's day, it were much

better

better we should keep asunder. But the shame of being thought religious, the custom of visiting on this day, and method of running together in public places, where it is unreasonable to expect one serious word should be spoken, have so established unprofitable conversation on the Sabbath, that we are come to speak our own words without suspicion of our doing any thing amiss, and thereby have both destroyed that honour due to the day, and that spiritual advantage we should otherwise reap from it. I wish we would try the difference; and see what keeping alone or conversing on religious subjects would produce. It is a pitiable thing, that while we wish well to our fouls, we should be taking in poison with our meat every Lord's day.

By this time we may be able to judge whether we have ceafed on the Sabbath-day from worldly affairs to good purpofes. As far as we fanctified the Lord's day in public, in private, and in all our communications, we have done this: but as far as we have failed herein, and fought our own pleafure, we have not. And if this matter be well fought into, I suppose we shall all find we have abundance to answer for at the judge-

ment-feat of Christ.

The third and last thing contained in a due observance of the Lord's day was said to be a right aim in ceasing from worldly labours, and in exercising the religious observances just mentioned. Now the righteousness of the aim is, when there is a correspondence between our design in keeping, and God's design in instituting the Sabbath; which was said in the introduction of this discourse to be twofold.

I. His glory,

II. Our spiritual profit.

First, Hath then our design in the observance we have paid to the Sabbath, been principally to glorify God? I gave them my Sabbaths, says God, to be a sign between me and them\*; namely, a sign that I the Lord Jehovah, Father, Son and holy Spirit, am their God, and they consequently my people. The Sabbath was to be a sign of this. How so? Why because God hath appointed it so to be; having enjoined his people to sanctify the seventh day for this purpose: to the end that they observing this his institution by meeting together to worship him, all the world may know he is the God they profess, and they the

people whom he will bless and preserve. So you see the due observance of the Sabbath, especially in all the parts of public worship reverently and humbly, is the great instituted means of our professing God to be our God. Indeed there is no other proper means of making fuch profession. How should the world know whom we ferve, but by the fignificant method here provided for us, wherein we, laying afide all worldly things at God's command, do meet and join together in worship in honour of his name? The confequence of this is, that every Christian, coming into public worship, and observing the Lord's day, doth hereby own God in Christ as his God; doth take this public way of making fuch acknowledgement, and of professing that as a lost finner he looks for falvation upon that glorious plan contrived by the bleffed Trinity, in which the Father fends, the Son comes, and the holy Ghost applies what the Son fo fent of the Father hath effected. Now yourselves only can judge whether to make profession of the Trinity, and of faith in Christ as the only ground of your hope in time and eternity, hath been your aim in observing the Lord's day, and particularly in coming to public Christian worship; which to do is mere folly if a man have not this faith. If this were more the believer's aim in observing the Lord's day, it would have a direct influence to his observing it more strictly. Besides this, Secondly, Hath your aim in fanctifying the Lord's day, been the fanctification of your own foul? The Sabbath, confidered as a rest, immediately leads our faith forward to the rest remaining for believers in heaven; and at the fame time by enjoining us to cease from labour, doth represent to us the necessity of ceasing from sin in the way to that glory which shall be revealed. It is a gracious design, to have heaven in the eye, under the observance of the weekly rest, to be looking to an exalted Redeemer, so both enlivening our hope of the eternal inheritance, and mortifying under the influence of that hope the power of fin. Well may the believer fay, "This is a temporary rest, yet it is a gracious one, it gives me opportunity 6 to confider with more attention my eternal rest: how glorious, how delightful, how perfect, how endless it is no imagination. Iefus is gone before to prepare a place, and he will come again; I fee him already by faith on the clouds, he calls from their dust the departed faints, he places them near him on the right hand, he bids them enter into his joy. They live, they

they reign for ever; they are for ever with their Lord. Come then, my foul, thou wilt not barter heaven for a poor vain world. Down, down, ye vile lufts; ye foes to my Saviour and my foul, I forfake you all; pleafure, interest, ease, homour, esteem and pride, I facrifice you all to my eternal hopes." You cannot but fay such views as these are altogether becoming the day of remembering a risen Redeemer gone into heaven. But are they yours? Do you thus fanctify the Lord's day, and have you always thus fanctified it? O for how much nobler purposes was this designed than for vanity, pleafure and sloth!

From what hath been faid on the Sabbath, I am confident you will all fee cause enough of condemnation and of humiliation. You belong to a crucified Master, see in this instance again how you have pierced him. And while you seek and humbly rely on the pardon of these fins through the merit of his blood, let that blood influence you to a godly forrow and hatred of all your transgressions. 'So Jesus shall see of the travel of his soul and be fatissied;' to him with the Father and the holy Ghost, be glory, honour and praise, world without end. Amen.

## SERMON XXXIII.

#### GALATIANS iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our schoolnaster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

ROM a distinct consideration of the duties respecting godliness required of us in the four first commandments, we have abundantly feen that use of the law described in the Text, namely, of ferving as a School master to bring us unto Christ. These commandments applied to our consciences have condemned us all; and if we have duly confidered the curfe annexed to every fingle breach of them, the fense of our manifold guilt will needs bring us unto Christ, that we may be accepted by God's mercy through the merit of his perfect righte-I fay, we have all been condemned, for who among us is guiltless? Review only what we have gone over, and fav if one and all be not guilty. Doth not the following confession fuit every one of us? 'Lord, thou knowest my heart, and my ways are not hid from thee. Wilt thou be exact to mark what is done amiss? Thou knowest I have had other gods before thee, I have fet up my worldly idols in my heart; worldly things I have loved too much, and trusted in too much, and feared the loss of them beyond all things: but to · love thee, to trust in and fear thee, how little has my heart known to do this? Thou fearcher of hearts knowest what a ftranger I have been to thee, how little I have known thee, or defired or endeavoured to know thee, how fadly I have forgotten thee, how much of my days is gone by, and thou wast not in all my thoughts; yea, and when I have thought No. 4.

of thee, how unbecoming it has been; with how little esteem and gratitude, with how little reverence, with how much dif-'trust of thee, murmuring against thee! O enter not into judge-6 ment with thy fervant for having had other gods before thee! but have mercy upon me, and incline my heart to keep this law .- And hast thou charged me, O sovereign God, to bow down and worship before thee? To pray without ceasing, to meditate on thy word, to observe thy ordinances? What then shall I answer for all the slights I have put upon thy word and ministry, thy worship and facraments, for all my floth, coldness, negligence, and formality in calling upon thy 'name? Are all my breaches of covenant-vows, all my difrefpectful approaches to and neglects of thy word, all my life-· less wandering prayers; are these all noted in thy book of remembrance against me? Then, Lord, have mercy upon me, for my fins against thy second commandment are more in number than the hairs of my head .- And hast thou also charged me to have respect unto, and glorify thee in all the words of my tongue, and all the actions of my life? Requirest thou of me so to speak, and so to act, as that in all thou emayst be glorified; and that every where, and in all places, it should be made manifest in me that I am thy servant, thine only: my conduct always fuch as that in all things thou mayst be honoured, and the whole world know me to be thy fervant? So thou chargest, and I confess that thy charge is holy, just and good; so thou oughtest in all things to be mag-'nified. But how far have I been from bringing this just tribute of glory to thy name! My conduct how often has it been difgraceful to my profession, vain, carnal, worldly, conformed to the ways and customs of an evil generation! And this tongue, how continually hath it spoken idly, or lightly, or erafhly, or angrily, or wantonly, or profanely! Lord, thou knowest there is end of my transgressions; thy mercies only are more in number: have mercy upon me, O my God, and incline my heart to keep this Law. - Also it is thy commandment, that I should remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy; that I should cease from my worldly cares and business, onot to pass the consecrated hours in idleness, or pleasure, or intemperance, but by exercises of private and public worship that I should fanctify the day wholly to the Lord. But how often have worldly things employed my hands, how much · more

more often my tongue, how most of all my thoughts in these facred hours! and even when I have ceased from worldly affairs, how little have I ceased from my own pleasure! what unprofitable conversations, what needless visitings, what idle wanderings, lie upon the records of my memory! At best, how little have I fanctified thy day by facred meditation and heaven-'ly employments; how little laboured to afcend unto the rest 'above, and pass the hours with an exalted Jesus, to the glory of thy name, and spiritual advantage of my immortal foul! Mercy, Lord, mercy upon a miserable Sabbath-breaker! how infinitely indebted am I to the blood of Christ that cleanseth from all fin?' After fuch a review of the first commandments more immediately regarding God, it will be eafy to conclude we shall not be found guiltless in those of the second table, which are then only kept, when observance of them arifes from a fense and a discharge of that duty we owe to God required in the first. Nevertheless, in order to favour that felf-righteous scheme so pleasing to our hearts, that we might think well of ourselves, it has been the customary manner to explain the commands of the fecond table in a literal fense, and even to take no notice of what the four first commandments enjoin: infomuch that the perfon who has abstained from the three grofs acts of murder, adultery and theft, has been ready to fay, 'I have kept all the commandments from my youth,' and am certainly free in this matter: than which nothing leads more directly to detain fouls in a damnable fecurity. To remove this foul ruining mistake, there needs no more than to open the law in its true spiritual sense, as our Lord in opposition to such destructive teachings has taught us to do: and then the whole world is found guilty before God, as has been abundantly made manifest to your own consciences in opening the commandments already spoken to. With the same design I proceed now to submit to your inquiry what the fifth commandment requires of us.

Honour thy father and mother. This is the first commandment, regarding the duty we owe one another; and is deservedly set in the first place, because it is the sum of all those duties we owe to our neighbour, and so of the largest latitude and extent, its observance, or non-observance also being of the greatest importance to the church of God. From whence you may easily see, that a regard or disregard to this command-

ment, will beyond all other things, manifest the state and condition of our fouls. When our regard to God is carried into, and regulates our temper and conduct in the various relations we bear to each other as superiors, inferiors, and equals, it will be certain and evident we have the honour of his government at heart. But if our pretences to piety and devotion have not so happy an effect upon our behaviour one toward another; and while we are exact and diligent in attendance on worship, we are stubborn inferiors, haughty superiors, and selfwilled equals, it is plain our proud hearts have never been humbled, we are not endued with the mind of Jesus, nor partakers of his spiritual kingdom; and all our religion is vain. Thus much was needful to be faid in general. I come now to open this commandment for examination and humiliation. And the extent of it being great, it will demand more of our time.

Honour thy father and thy mother. To honour is to own the dignity, eminence and authority which God hath put on the objects to be honoured, and this both in an internal reverence of them in the mind, and by an external expression of it in the conduct.

Thy father and mother; that is, not only thy natural parents, but all others whom God hath marked out and distinguished by dignity and excellency, as he has done thy natural parents.—Where there is no dignity nor excellency, there is no place for reverence and honour.

On the other hand, all to whom God has given dignity and excellency, are hereby equally, though more implicitly, enjoined not to use it to their own ends, but to the glory of God, and the benefit of those whom God has made inferior to them.

This is the general defign of the commandment. And you fee it takes in all the relations we stand in to one another as superiors and inferiors. I will open the principal of them for your examination. And,

I. The duty of children towards their parents, and of parents toavards their children. This shall be the matter of our present

inquiry

Previous to what will be faid upon the duties of parents and children, I would observe there is such a thing as natural affection, which I suppose does not come within the scope of this

commandment. The apostle indeed speaks of many, namely, parents and children, who were without this natural affection,\* but then he is describing, not persons transgressing this, or any other part of the written law of God, but heathens departed from the light they had, and funk in vice to that degree, as to have lost those very feelings and practices, which in common with other animals they were urged to by instinct. To fay, therefore, that to be wanting in natural affection is a transgression of the fifth commandment, is not, I conceive, to understand the commandment rightly, which is not defigned to bid us do that which we, by the mere instinct of nature alone, are inclined to do, and do actually without any thought of God's will in the matter, till by the indulgence of our lufts, these our very natural instincts are destroyed, and we become more unnatural than the brutes; but this commandment requires of us that which we are not in the least degree by nature inclined to do, namely, as parents to use our authority over our children, not for our own ends, but for God's glory in their spiritual welfare; and as children to honour our parents, because they bear the authority of God towards us and over us. Hence by the way it is eafy to fee,

First, That natural affection is no virtue, however in other respects good and desirable it may be: for you see it is but a mere instinct, and just no more than what is common to the beasts with us. Let not then parents or children, the former especially in whom this natural instinct is strongest, mistake this for the duty they owe one to the other, by virtue of this commandment; nor apprehend that because this natural affection does beget continual tenderness, diligence, and care, therefore the duty of parent or child is effectually discharged. The very worst parents or children, who have lost all sense of duty, will hardly be able altogether to extinguish this natural principle, which also is often found acting in the highest degree, where there is not any thought of the child's salvation on one side, nor of the honour due to parents on the other.

Yet, Secondly, We may fee also, that if this natural affection be lost, it can only be in consequence of the most advanced measure of sin. Self-will, and self-pleasing must have entirely ingressed the soul, seeing not only all principles of reli-

gion are excluded, but also all natural principles are eradicated

by it. And,

Thirdly, I would observe on this matter, that though this natural affection be a great help in doing many duties on either fide, which would otherwife be exceedingly difagreeable and painful; yet on the other hand, it is very apt to degenerate into a destructive fondness in parents towards children, causing the parent to indulge them in their humours, to give them their own will, not to endure to cross, much less to correct them; in short, to give up all authority, and to leave the child to do as he pleases, till being unrestrained, he is grown peevish, wilful, desperate, intolerable to all, and a great grief of heart even to the fond parent, whose fondness has been indeed has been the main cause of the child's undoing. So you may see fondness is a vicious excess and abuse of natural affection that cannot be too much guarded against, especially by mothers, in whom natural affection is strongest, and who therefore are most liable to fall into this destructive way of indulging their children to please themselves. I do not stop to make answer to many excuses which fondness is ready to plead, for itself; only I am desirous it may be observed that when I find fault with fondness, I do not mean to blame natural affection, but only that it should be kept within its proper bounds. And what these are, you shall now see, while I am describing,

First, The duty of parents towards their children, as required by this commandment. And what will be distinctly feen, if this one thing be carefully observed, that God, by this commandment, requiring children, on pain of his wrath, to honour their parents, does thereby himself expressly put a power into the parents hands. Now though parents must needs have a natural power over their children, in confequence of their begetting, nourishing, and caring for them; yet a divine additional power to enforce upon children all their obligations, by the express revealed authority of God himself, parents could not have, unless God had been pleased to give it them. But to what end must we suppose God has put so folemn a power into the hands of parents? What, to fwell them up with pride, and that they may use it tyrannically over their children? God forbid. What then, to enable the parents more effectually to provide for the temporal prosperity of their children? No, nor this neither, any farther than fuch an

authority in temporal things might ferve the higher purpose of promoting God's glory in the Christian education of children, and their being placed in such a state of life as might best contribute to their living to the same glory, and to the eternal welfare of their own souls. God's end is his own glory in all things; and therefore when he adds his revealed authority to the natural authority of the parent, it is with this design, that they may bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. This being kept in view, it will be no difficult matter for all parents to see if they have done their duty to their children, which will be found within the following particulars.

First, Aiming at their religious conduct. Secondly, Setting them a good example.

Thirdly, Instructing them.

Fourthly, Encouraging them in all good ways.

Fifthly, Being gentle toward them.
Sinthly, Seasonably correcting them.

Seventhly, Placing them in a proper calling.

Eighthly, Providing for them.

Ninthly, Taking care how they marry.

Tenthly, To fay all, praying for them. So far as parents have come short, or acted contrary to any of these things, they have sinned against their children, and broken the fifth commandment. A short word will be sufficient upon each.

First, It is the duty of parents to aim at the religious education of their children above all things. God faith of Abraham, I know him, that he will command his children and his houshold after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.\* This you find was Abraham's aim in the use of that authority God had given him over his children. And parents can you say it has been yours, your great aim, always the principle that governed you in your conduct towards your children, and guidance of them? Hath it really been your great aim and endeavour that this might be effected? And in comparison of this, have you been little solicitous about their accomplishments or prosperity in the world? Be assured if it has not; if to bring them up in the sear of God has not been the principal object of your care, that which has regulated all

your conduct respecting them, you have not done the least part of your duty towards them: if you have had no higher prospects than for their well-doing in the world, or have been regarding them as your property, and have been devising to get yourself a name in them, you have gone out of the way of your duty, and have forgotten for what end God gave you authority over them. Has the glory of God in your childrens religious behaviour, been your grand aim, regulating every step you have taken in your management of them? This is the

leading inquiry. And hereupon, let it be asked,

Secondly, Have you been fetting them fuch an example as might best tend to form their minds to religion on the one side, and to discourage vice in them on the other? Have you carefully endeavoured they should see in you every thing which might dispose them to love and practife religion; should see in you an engaging pattern of humility and faith, of heavenly mindedness, and the love of God, of charity, and meekness, of deadness to the world respecting its honours, interests, and pleasures; that they should see you feared God, studied above all things to please him, and would not willingly displease him to please all the men, or get all the things of the whole world; that they should see you delighted in worshipping God, by the constant, regular, devout, and solemn worship you kept up daily in your family, and by the time they must know you fpent with God in private in your closet? And on the other fide, have they feen every thing in you which might tend to discourage vice in them; how hateful it was to you, how careful you were to avoid it? You have not fet before them a pattern of pleafure and company keeping, and idleness, and vanity? They have not feen you indulging over the glafs, or pampering your body by gluttonous living? You have not been an example to them of lewdness, or swearing, of ambition or covetoufness, of fabbath breaking, of licentiousness, of pride, felf will, anger and violence, expressed in your countenance and words, than which nothing is or can be a more hurtful example to children? Thus have you endeavoured, by your example, to nurture your children in the ways of God?

Thirdly, Have you carefully instructed your children in the knowledge of Christ? 'These words that I command thee this s day shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them dili-

egently unto thy children.\*' You fee it is the parents duty themselves to catechise and instruct their children, as far as they are able. It is the least part of this to teach them by rote the catechism and their prayers, both should be explained to them by the parents, and the children taught to regard them both as matters of the last and best importance: in doing which what is wanting in the parents ability must be made up in his diligence. Nor on any pretence must this point of instruction be put over by the parents to the schoolmaster and minister, who ordinarily will be able to do little, if the parents authority and co-operating instruction be wanting to give weight to their endeavours. Parents must be diligent and frequent in this work themselves, and cause their children also to attend and mind the instructions of the school and church. Particularly the latter; in which regard I have matter of complaint against many parents among you who give themselves no care to cause their children to attend the public catechising, at least when they are grown to such years as to be capable of any confiderable improvement: but leave the young persons to themselves to come or not as they see fit, and as suits their own humours. Wherefore I earnestly befeech and require all parents to look to it, that their young ones give their attendance, and that not promiscuously in the congregation, as part of the audience (in which they do nothing but play and difturb all near them) but in the place assigned them; that they may not only hear, but render an account of what they heard. The third duty then of parents was instruction. Consider if you have nothing to charge yourfelf with on this head.

Fourthly, Have you encouraged your children in all good ways? And in the parents power it is to encourage their children by giving them helps, and shewing themselves peculiarly delighted in them, when they discover any serious marks of religion on their minds. Indeed parents must not make their children proud upon any attainments: but it is in their power without doing this to encourage them. They may shew their children, that they esteem religion as not only the greatest ornament, but the richest blessing they wish for them.—They may let their children know that they pray daily for

God's grace upon their hearts; and that they have little concern about their prosperity in this world, in comparison with what they feel for their being the fervants of Christ and inheritors of everlasting life. The question is, have parents according to their ability heartily endeavoured to encourage their children in the ways of religion? It must be a horril part in a parent to do the contrary, and to discourage them from the ways of godlines. O how will they answer it to their children, perhaps eternally loft through this very thing, when they shall stand before the judgement seat of the Lord Jesus! There are not a few, faith a fensible writer, who feem afraid, · lest by being trained up in the holy religion of Christ, their children should be brought too much out of love with this world, and learn that piece of ill husbandry (as they esteem (it) to account all things but loss for the excellency of the 'knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord.'

Fifthly, Have you been gentle towards your children? Fathers, faith the apostle, provoke not your children to wrath.\* Harshness in the parent is a fruit of the very same stock with stubbornness in the child? both proceed from self-will indulged. There is no good to be expected from harshness; on the contrary it is the natural parent of lying, hypocrify, and many other sins; till the child is grown old enough no longer to endure it, and breaks out into absolute waywardness and independency. The parent must hold his authority, yet must use it with a gentle hand. Gentleness doth not lie in humouring children, but by mild and prudential measures, rather than by heat and violence, bringing them to compliance. This gentleness in all cases is needful, but especially in the point of religion, lest by means of force and severity children become hypocrites instead of Christians. Yet at proper seasons,

Sixthly, Have you also corrected your children? If you have, let me ask for what? Their vices, I hope, not their indiscretions, particularly the two great vices of children, stubbornness, and idleness? Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; the rod of correction shall drive it far from him; Here by foolishness, you must understand wickedness, which saith the Spirit is bound in the heart of the child, this is what we are all born with; and it is this, and this alone the rod of

cor-

correction must drive out. The breakings out of natural corruption must be restrained by the parents interposing their chastising authority. So you see parents may not correct their children for their own pleasure, to gratify their own passions; they may not correct them for their indifcretions, for being children: but for their bad tempers they may, and must correct them. That is their duty to them; as to neglect it shews but small love of their souls, though very great and very finful fondness for their persons. Yet too often we shall see children punished for their indiscretions, and their vices escaping; and the rod more frequently used to indulge the bad humours of the parent, than to correct those of the child.-What fay you now, have you not withholden the rod? or have you used it only in restraining your children's corruptions? If you have spared the rod, you have laid aside your authority; if you have used it for your own pleasure, you have abused it. The

Seventh duty of parents, is to place their children in a proper calling; that is, such an one as, their circumstances and talents considered, will best contribute to their doing God service in the world, and will least expose them to temptations. In determining this important matter, the parent must have directly in his eye the glory of God, and the spiritual welfare of the child. It is this, and not what will in a worldly view be most advantageous, must guide his determinations. The manifold daily abuses in this kind should cause parents seriously to consider, and to lay to heart, by what motives they have been directed, in a matter, wherewith not only the present prosperity, but the suture happiness of their children stands so nearly connected: and in this view, the making the only rule of determination what the child likes, will hardly be justifiable.

Eighthly, It is the duty of parents to lay up for their children a fuitable provision: and a fuitable one is that which will enable them best to exercise their calling with most advantage to God's glory, and with least temptation to their own souls. The parent is not to make indeed the leaving his children a competency an excuse for his own covetousness, and for not giving to the poor out of that wherewith God hath blessed him: but then neither is he to neglect making provi-

fion

fion for them through floth, nor to squander their portion in extravagant living. The proverb, that charity begins at home, seems founded in the thing now before us. A man must give to others with a more sparing hand, till provision be made for his own houshold; and then he must open his hand more largely in acts of liberality. But what is a competency for a child? The answer is easy, that which will enable him to live agreeably to his station. But how shall I know what that is, seeing people of the same station live very differently? This must be determined by the practice of prudent and serious

people.

Ninthly, I will just add a word upon the point of marriage: concerning which, as this at least is clear, that children ought not to marry without their parents confent; fo it will lie in the parents power, and is the indispensible duty of parents, to prevent their children's marrying to graceless persons: for so the rule is, 'Let them marry, only in the Lord.'\* Grace is the first qualification; and therefore if the parent, biassed by interest, gives his confent where the person to marry his child is graceless, he betrays the trust God has put into his hand, and shamefully fins against God's glory, and the foul of his child. So far is clear. But is this the whole of the parent's duty in the point of marriage? I find the patriarchs, in fcripture, feeking wives for their fons: and if parents did not leave fo great a matter wholly to their children, as is commonly done, but would at a proper time of life, feek out suitable persons for their children, proposing them to their inclinations without force or confirmint, they would tread in the steps of Abraham, Isaac, and other scripture examples, and not at all step out of the way of their duty to their children. But.

Tentbly and Lastly, Have you been constant and importunate at the throne of grace for the spiritual welfare of your children? that in all these things God would direct you, and bless them? Have you prayed for the grace of God to be poured into their hearts; and for that beyond all things?—Are there records of such your daily intercessions, written in the book of God's remembrance? And will it be found there

at the judgment day?

But

But I have done. Such is the duty of parents. You fee how fpiritual, as well as important it is. You will prove yourselves by it, as many as have been in that relation. I refer the duties of children to our next meeting, when I especially wish all young persons may be present, to hear on their part, what a charge God has laid upon them respecting their parents by this fifth commandment.

# SERMON XXXIV.

#### GALATIANS iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our school naster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

HE relative duties required by the fifth commandment are now under examination for the purpose expressed in the Text, that seeing ourselves condemned by the Law, we may humble ourselves, and come unto Christ. The relation of parents and children was entered upon when we last met. Then I shewed you, how God had put authority into the hands of parents; that his design therein was his own glory in the religious education of children; and that consequently it was the duty of parents to use their authority over their children with the simple view of educating them in the knowledge and practice of christianity, which was branched out into several of the most important particulars in the duty of parents. I am now to speak,

Secondly, Of the duty of children towards their parents. In this relation we must all have been; and therefore the present subject will be of more universal concernment than the last. We have all had parents. Have we done our duty toward them? Here some perhaps will hold themselves guiltless, because their parents died when they were young: indeed in that case the obligations which are purely natural ceased; but the obligations which arise from this commandment, did not: for according to this commandment the authority over such children, as well as the duty of a parent, devolved upon those who had the care of them, and stood in the place of parents toward them: so that the point now under consideration is of

universal concern to us all.

The word of commandment is this, Honour thy father and mother. Observe, it is not said, bear a natural affection toward thy father and mother, but honour and reverence them. Natural affection there will be, till children grow altogether reprobate: but there may be much of this, where there is little or nothing of the reverence here commanded. A child, who is very wicked toward God, may have much natural affection for his parents. But to honour and reverence them, as bearing God's authority, and from a fenfe of duty to God, this is the main point, and the only mark of a truly dutiful child. Our business therefore is see what is meant by this word bonour thy father and thy mother, which will lay open to us the whole duty of children to parents. Now to honour has been said to be to acknowledge the dignity there is in another. Confequently to honour our parents is in all fuitable ways to acknowledge that dignity and authority God has put upon them. And this acknowledgement must be twofold.

First, There must be an inward acknowledgement of their

dignity and authority upon the heart.

Secondly, There must be an outward expression thereof in a becoming behaviour. But because where the one of these is, the other cannot fail to be: I shall consider them together.

To honour parents implies an acknowledgement of that dignity and authority God has put upon them both, both father and mother. And where this is, there will not be wanting fuitable outward expressions of it. I say both father and mother, for the commandment mentions both, and requires the one to be honoured as well as the other. It requires both of them to be honoured, not for the fake of any natural accomplishments of sense and parts, or for any worldly distinctions of wealth, honour and station, but because God's authority is put upon them equally and in common; and fo the one must be honoured as well as the other, and neither of them the lefs, because they may be without any confiderable either natural or acquired endowments. Now this honour must needs imply all fuch things as do acknowledge God's authority in the perfons of our parents, and do correspond with God's design in giving parents that authority. For though God has put authority in the parents hand, it is plain nevertheless that neither God's glory, nor the child's spiritual benefit is therein promoted any farther than the child has regard to God's authority in the persons of his parents, considering them as set over him under and for God. From hence it is evident that the

First duty of children to parents, and that also without which they can do no part of their duty to them upon a right principle, is to reverence them as immediately appointed by God to direct their education. This is in the strictest sense to honour parents. Honour them; have regard to their authority over you. Respect that authority as God's appointment. Now children, have you confidered your parents as God's deputies, and in that view have you had a becoming reverence on your heart toward them? What has it been the main thing causing you to reverence them, that God bid you do so? And have you indeed reverenced them, and always done fo? And both of them, your mother as well as your father? Whatever has been their condition in life, whether poor or rich; whatever has been their conduct in general, and toward yourself, still have you reverenced them; not thinking yourfelf by any conduct or circumstances of theirs, or by any advantages of knowledge, grace, fenfe, wealth, station, you may have attained beyond them, discharged in any degree from that which God requires you to have and bear on your heart toward them?—The opposite to this is irreverence, setting light by father or mother; making no account of them any farther than we need them. This is a common fault and fin in many children, they have no reverence of their parents in their hearts; and they shew none in their expressions toward them. They may perhaps fear them, while they are younger; and when they are grown up may have some respect to them through natural affection, or for the sake of what they may expect from them; but to respect them with a godly reverence they know not. Yet the commandment doth not fay, Honour your father and mother, because they begat you, because you live in their house, and are cared for by them: it doth not say, honour them, while you have your dependence upon them, and then you need honour them no longer: nor doth it fay, Honour your father, because he is a wise and experienced and wealthy man; honour your mother, because she is very fond of you, and is ready to let you do as you please: but it faith, at large, without regard to circumstances, and with a peremptory command, Honour thy father and mother. Behold I charge thee fo to do. I suppose there is much failure throughout the world with regard to this godly reverence; else we should

should not find so little an account made of parents, when they are no longer needed, and are grown old enough to be inconvenient, or troublesome, or expensive: else children would not be answering so pertly, and disputing so faucily, and in all things behaving so stubbornly and frowardly as many do, fil-

ling their parents houses with noise and clamour.

From this reverence will spring out many other dispositions, which are the duties of children toward their parents. For it is manifest, if God has put authority into the parents hand for his glory, in the religious education of children, that then it must be the duty of children humbly to acknowledge that authority, in every case to which it reaches. And so children must reverence their parents in all their instructions, discipline, corrections, disposals and directions; in all which they must behave with a humble chearful compliance, not expecting to have their own will, but studying to please and obey their parents in all.

The Second duty therefore of children, is chearfully and humbly to attend unto their parents instructions. When parents are teaching their children the ways of God, examining into their conduct, shewing them the finfulness of their nature, and the danger of fuch and fuch wrong courses taken up by them; when they are warning them of the evil of certain fins they are most liable to, as stubbornness, felf-will, idlenefs, pride, company keeping, or love of pleafure, vanity in dress. or any thing else; when they are giving their children directions on these heads, and requiring their careful observance of them, they are acting in the character of parents; and it is the duty of children humbly to hearken, and carefully to observe such instructions. The word of God is express on this head, My fon, hear the instructions of thy father, and for sake not the law of thy mother\*. Nor do I understand that in any advanced age of children, either they or the parents are discharged from this reciprocal duty, as need requires. We find old Jacob sharply reproving the conduct of his two sons in the matter of the Shechemites +; and old Eli condemned for not restraining the impiety of Hophini and Phinehast, when they were not only grown to be men, but were in the admini-Aration of the priesthood. The question therefore is, have No. 5. children

<sup>\*</sup> Prov. i. 8.

<sup>1 1</sup> Sam. iii. 13.

children meekly heard and carefully observed the instructions of their parents, relating to religious conduct? Look back, and see. Were not such lessons grievous and intolerable to you? When you were warned against certain companions or practices, were you never impatient? When you were reproved for your faults, were you never resentful, and even ready to sling away in a rage? In your grown years, have you not thought, what have my parents to do with me? And when an affectionate mother may have offered you some serious counsel, have you not thought yourselves particularly intitled to laugh at it, and disregard it? Perhaps behaved so irreverently to your parents that they have been afraid to speak freely to you; and have incurred Eli's sin through fear of displeasing you?

The Third duty of children, is chearfully to submit to the By this I mean the religious discipline or parents discipline. government of the family. When Joshua faid, As for me and my house we will serve the Lord\*; he spake like one who had a proper fense of the authority God had put into his hands. He was refolved God should be served in his house, and it was the duty of his children duly to conform to the order and regulations he made therein. While the pious parent in the fear of God will allow no bad orders within his walls, expects all his dependants to attend the family worship, and forbids all idle wanderings abroad on the Lord's day, the children must dutifully comply with the whole and every particular; and that however they be advanced to riper years. Thankfully and chearfully in all fuch orders they must submit to the parents pleasure; and it will be a peculiar fin against their authority to flight, or shew any dislike of fuch religious regulations. Yet how often do children think this grievous! have you not thought it a burden to be thus confined to religious exercises; A hardship, that your parents would not allow you such pleafures, as, you are ready to fay, they themselves took when they were young? Have you not thought it a hard thing they would not permit you to wander about and take pleasure on Sundays? And have you not often undutifully deceived them by feigned pretences in one and another of these particulars?

Fourthly, It is the duty of children chearfully to fubmit to the corrections of their parents, and humbly to profit by them. By correction I mean any method the parent uses for re-

straining

<sup>\*</sup> Joshua xxiv. 15.

straining the vices of his children. And under correction it is the child's duty,

I. To be humbled for his fault.

SERM. 34.

II. To be grieved for having incurred his parents displeasure.

III. To fubmit to reproof. And,

IV. To endeavour without delay to recover God's favour and his parents also. And let me add, it is the duty of children thus to behave under the corrections of their parents, whether they be more or less severe, whether of the rod or the tongue, whether of father or mother.

First, They must be humbled for their fault whatever it be, whether lying, or swearing, or idleness, or company-keeping, or whatever else. They must not deny they have done amiss, and set about to excuse themselves; as, if they could escape

their parents displeasure, all were well enough.

Secondly, They must be grieved for having incurred their parents displeasure. For that they must principally be grieved, and not for the correction they have brought on themselves.

Thirdly, They must submit to their chastissement; not be angry with their parents for doing their duty to them; but own their fault, and confess they deserve and need correction. A

hard lesson for a proud heart.

Fourthly, They must seek God's forgiveness and their parents. Alas, how little is the former thought of by stubborn children! and how loth are they to conform to the latter. Inflead of asking the parents forgiveness, and taking every measure to express a hearty forrow for being deservedly under displeasure, they grow fullen, appear diffatisfied, meditate revenge on those who had given as they suppose the information, and study rather how to bring their parents to compliance than to make any themselves. Sometimes this grows up to an intolerable infolence; they will stay no longer in the house, not they; what care they for their parents, with a deal of fuch threatening language behind their back if not in their faces; which shews a desperate pitch of wickedness, and a total loss of all reverence. Of such it is said in Deuteronomy, If a man have a stubborn and rebellious fon, who will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother; and that when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them: then fall his father and mother lay hold on him, and bring him out to the elders of his city; and the men of his city shall

flone him with stones, that he die\*.

Fifthly, Have you chearfully submitted to the disposals of your parents? This is another duty of children, to leave the management of themselves in the manner of their education to their parents will Children of the one fex must not affect any other schools or callings than their parents provide for them; nor those of the other such dress or pleasure as their parents do not fee fit for them. And in these things they must study not only to submit to, but to please their parents, shewing all chearfulness in doing as they are bid. There is no true reverence of parents, if children want to have their own will in fuch matters; and they fubmit, yet do it unthankfully as we fay. Jesus you know went down readily with his parents to Nazareth, and was subject unto them. It is really a graceless faying from a child to a parent, however innocently it may feem to be spoken, 'I will not be of that trade or profession; or why should not I do as this and that young person does?" Dutiful children dispute nothing, but chearfully submit to what their parents order; and that without making any queftioning upon the matter. But I suppose this is not the com-mon case of children. Too often young persons will be for taking the management of themselves out of their parents hands as foon as possible, and when indeed they are utterly unfit to judge of what is proper for them; they will shew themfelves displeased with the dispositions their parents are making for them, and will try all the arts of stubbornness and fondness to bring their parents to compliance. You may hear them talking already of what they will do when they are men and their own mafters, and impatiently longing for that feafon. Meantime as that advances, you may fee difregard to parental authority advancing with it, and new liberties daily taken in felf-government And now the young head is wife enough to fet up for itself, regards parents no farther than according to the worldly expectations had from them, manages all things at its own difcretion, and adventures into the most important passages of life without any respect to the authority or judgement of parents. What I chiefly hint at in these last words is the point of marriage. Concerning which I would wish all young persons to be sensible, that to engage their affections so far as to put it out of their parents power with any prudence to withhold their consent, and then to ask their approbation, is indeed at the most but to pay them a compliment, and that a coarse one too; and which they do not pay from any reverence, but through a sort of slavish sear, and because they cannot marry without their parents assistance. To say the truth, as many parents regard their children as their property, considering them only as those with whom they may do what they will, so many children in their turn seem to have no other notion of their parents; they look on what their parents have as theirs, and that is all they mind; they take advantage of their parents circumstances to dispose of themselves, and will think themselves hardly dealt with if their parents do not come into their measures; so indeed, as have said, using their parents

no otherwise than as their property.

Sixthly, It is the duty of children to submit reverently to the directions of their parents in all lawful things. I add this in the place of many other particulars that might be mentioned, and in order to make you fensible that the commandment is so large, as to require a reverent obedience to parents in every lawful case. There can be but this one exception, if the parents directions should be contrary to conscience towards God: in all other cases the rule holds, Children obey your parents in all things\* See how large the rule is, in all things, great as well as little, and little as well as great. In things of greater importance the matter is clear; to disobey is to dishonour.-But is it not so in leffer things? Certainly it is. For if the thing directed be little, it is more easily complied with, and therefore to disobey argues a greater irreverence. these lesser things take in the generality of the parents directions, and of the child's duty. Honour for parents will approve itself by a readiness to conform to their will in the whole of the childrens conduct; and the excellent proof of it is a being pleafed in doing or forbearing in the whole of the conduct, as will please the father and mother, whether the matters be great things or fmall. Confider then, has it been your study to please your parents in all things? to behave yourfelf as you knew they would have you? and has this accompanied you in their absence as well as in their presence? And that also when you could be fure they would never know you did? And have you done this not out of constraint but chearfully? I know not what your conduct may have been in this respect: but there is a manifest self-willedness of conduct in many children. They want to please themselves in all things? when they are restrained from it, you may see by their faces, if not hear from their mouths, that they are diffatiffied; and they will do what they will when their parents are out of fight. What I am now speaking of is more to be regarded, because it is in this desire of pleasing the parents rather than in any particular act, that the honouring them, that is, honouring God's authority in them, doth confift. And it is easy to see, that if there be this general desire to please and obey parents in the whole conduct, a conformity with their will in more interesting cases will not be wanting: as on the other hand, fuch children as have no regard to please their parents in the generality of their behaviour, cannot from a fense of duty, but only through fear or interest, comply with their will in more important particulars.

Such now is the duty of children. And you may fee how exactly it corresponds in every particular with God's design in putting his authority into the parents hands, for his own glory in the religious education of children. If parents are authorifed and required to train up their children in the ways of godliness; then it must be the child's duty to reverence his parents as bearing authority for that end, to observe their religious instructions, to conform to their religious discipline, to fubmit to their needful corrections, to yield himself to their disposals, and in all things to be guided by their will. This is plain, otherwise the design of the commandment is frustrated; and therefore, whenever we have departed from fuch an honouring of our parents, we have broken the fifth com-

mandment.

But you may fay, My parents do not or did not use their authority over me with this religious design you are talking of; they took no pains to make me acquainted with a covenant God: I had no good instructions from them; and when they corrected me it was to indulge their own passions; all their difposals and directions at best tended only to my worldly happiness; yea, and they have fet me an ill example, by neglect of family worship, and private worship in their closets, (for I know, that ordinarily they have spent no time there) by fabbath-breaking, company-keeping,

company-keeping, drunkenness, swearing, passion, and the like. And doth not fuch a conduct in my parents discharge me from the duty I owe them? Must I honour such parents as these? Doubtless you must. No misconduct in them toward you, will justify any irreverence in you toward them: for God faith, Honour thy father and mother, without any limitation. But you fay, how can I honour them when they are wicked? Why if they were good, the reason of your honouring them, considered as parents, is not because they are good, but because they are parents, and because God has put authority upon them as such. So you fee that the authority God hath put upon them, makes them honourable, whether they be bad or good. And were they good, to honour them for that, and not for the authority God hath put upon them, were to go beside the commandment. Here lies the difficulty, to honour parents folely from the confideration because God has put authority upon them: and in this view, it is just as difficult to honour good parents as bad ones. But how must I honour bad parents? Just as you would honour good ones. You must reverence them in your heart; you must obey them in all lawful things; you must study to please them; you must speak respectfully to them; you must not speak disrespectfully of them. You say now your parents are bad? Well then, have you honoured them in this manner? Have you reverenced them in your heart? Or have you not licentiously taken advantage of their faults to slight them in your mind? Have you obeyed them in all lawful things? Or have you not set up for your own master? Have you studied to please them, and always to do fo for conscience sake? Have you behaved respectfully to them, and that even when they were behaving unkindly to you? And if you have warned them of their faults, has it been with modesty and trembling? Have you covered those faults, as much as you might, not uncovering their nakedness, nor speaking lightly of them to others? Have you prayed for them; and also endeavoured by the meekness and humbleness of your demeanour to win their souls?

I have now fuggested matter enough of inquiry upon the duty of children; and therein I suppose of humiliation. It were greatly to be wished that parents and children would lay to heart what has been said on this important subject; which, as I observed in the beginning, has the greatest connection with our estate towards God, and a religious regard to which is among the most substantial proofs of an interest in Christ Jesus.

# SERMON XXXV.

### GALATIANS, iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

A LTHOUGH the subject undertaken from these words was designed for the Sundays in Lent, yet it will be improper to leave the consideration of that commandment we had entered upon unfinished. Therefore I will go on with the sith Commandment already begun with, and submit to your consideration and examination those several other relative duties it enjoins, having already spoken to the duties of parents and children.

A Second pair of duties required by the fifth Commandment,

are those regarding masters and servants.

First of the duty of servants. You must consider we have all a twofold calling; a general calling, and a particular calling. The general calling is that which is common to us all, the profession of Christianity. The particular is that special stan tion of life, or course of employment, in which we are engaged. Now as there can be no contradiction between these two. if our special calling be an honest one; so it is the most important proof of our being really Christians, that we faithfully ferve God therein: I fay when the main thing we have in view is to serve and glorify God in our special calling, then we do most of all approve ourselves true members of Christ: as well, because such special calling is the very place allotted us in which we should serve God in our generation; as because our special calling must in a manner ingross all our time. What is advanced thus in general, I now particularly apply to the matter before us, the case of servants.

First,

First, The duty of servants is to consider themselves servants of God in that their calling. Servants faith St Paul in the 6th chapter to the Ephefians, be obedient to them that are your massers according to the fleb, with fear and trembling, in fingleness of your heart, as unto Christ: not with eye-service, as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men. Here, you fee, fervants are required to do their duty in their calling, with fingleness of heart, as unto Christ; not as if they had no more to do but to please their masters; but with good will and chearful readiness doing their business, because God expects it of them; and to please and glorify him. This is the main qualification of a good fervant. And without this none shall be so accounted in the fight of God, however diligent, faithful and careful to please their earthly masters they may be: for in truth fuch are not ferving God, but themselves: Nay, but indeed it cannot be imagined that such will faithfully and honeftly serve their masters upon earth. Sense of duty to God, as members of Christ's body, and serving the Lord in that calling, will carry fervants through all the duties and all the discouragements that attend this station of life. Such will not be eye-fervants, but feeing God's eye ever looking upon them, will be ever as diligent in the mafter's abfence as in his presence; such will not more squander their master's goods than they will fquander time, but will make the most of all for the master's benefit, as being put in trust by God; nor will fuch be discouraged and fall into murmuring under the hardships and unkindnesses which either their masters put upon them, or at least fervants will be apt to think they do. If the defire of pleafing God be wanting, and the greatest aim is to please the master, and serve their own interests, the best servants otherwise in the world will gain nothing in God's account, for Those that despise me, saith the Lord, shall be lightly esteemed. Nor upon strict inquiry will they be found, either careful as they ought of their master's interests, or diligent as they should be at their labour: most of all, they will not endure with a proper spirit those hardships or unkindnesses they have to contend with. They will be fecretly fretting under them, and ready to utter passionate and irreverent speeches; Though I should work myself to death my master would not care,

care,' and 'This is what I get for my labour.' Indeed if we ferve earthly masters only, this may be often said truly enough: but if we serve God in our calling of servants, it can never be faid, 'Here is no confideration had of my diligence.' The true fervant of Christ knows better than to fay that: for as he does not feek a reward from man for his fervices, fo he is fure he shall not lose his reward from the hand of him whom he ferves, his master in heaven; and hereupon is not discouraged by those hardships and unkindnesses put upon him by his master on earth. Tacob was a good fervant under Laban, a covetous and hard master. Yet Laban's feverity did not cause Jacob to remit of his diligence. For twenty years together he went on ferving Laban with all his might: as he fays, By day the drought consumed him, and by night the frost, and sleep departed from his eyes\*; he was up early and late, and minded no weather. And what recompence did he get from Laban? Why, 'If any thing was torn, Jacob bare the loss of it; and whatever was stolen by day or night, poor Jacob must stand to it.' That there are many Labans in the world may not be questioned; but I fear they are few Jacobs, who ferve God in their calling with his faithfulness, diligence and zeal for his master's interest, and that too under fo many discouragements, and so much ill treatment as Jacob met with, in return for all the fervices he had done Laban. The too common language is, My master does not like me, why then let things go as they will; what care I how much is lost and squandered. - Now, servants, prove yourselves by this. What answer will you give to this question, have you been ferving God in your calling? If you have altogether failed here, there is a heavy account lying against you before God, for your constant trangression of his fifth commandment. But suppose you had some general eye to God in your service, hath that continually attended you, so that for God's sake you have been always diligent, faithful, patient? There is no inquiry fo important to fervants, who think well of their estate towards God through Jesus Christ, as this now before us. For as fervice is their talent, fo only by refolving this inquiry, can they be determined whether they have used it to the glory of God or not. And with regard to the matter of falvation, I must observe, it is of equal moment to you that you be found ferving

ferving God in your calling of fervants, as it is to me that I be found so doing in my calling, as a minister of the Gospel of Christ.—What I have been advancing on this head is the foundation; and that without which it is impossible to be a good servant: for conscience towards God must needs be the ground and support of all our duties, which God requireth from servants to their masters. But where there is this conscience towards God in servants, there will not be wanting, either reverence towards their masters, or shewing that reverence by obedience and bonesty, together with prayer for them, and for the success of their master's business in their hands; which are the remaining duties of servants, and which I come now more directly to lay before them for examination. Wherefore,

The ferond duty of fervants is to reverence their masters, This

reverence is twofold, inward and outward.

First, Inward Servants be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling\*. Be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward +. Let as many servants as are under the yoke, count their own masters worthy of all honour t. You fee God puts authority upon the master, and requires servants to respect and reverence it. As it was in parents, fo here in mafters, God's authority rests upon them; and for the sake of that they must reverenced. If you should reverence your masters because they are wise and wealthy, this would not be the thing; for then you would not reverence them at all if they were poor or ignorant: and this I suppose is a common case with servants; while they are in families where their masters are rich and great, and keep up some authority, they will have some respect towards such masters: but do they come under such as are lower in the world, or have not fo much discretion and weight with them, truly they have no respect for them at all. Yea, and in the same house you shall commonly see a kind of reverence had of the master and very little of the mistress. In fuch cases it is plain there is no regard had to God's authority; to which, and not to wisdom or wealth of the master, the reverence is due. I fay, it is God's authority puts honour upon the masters; and that whether the master be rich or poor; wife

<sup>\*</sup> Ephes. vi. 5.

<sup>‡ 1</sup> Tim. vi. 1.

wife or foolish, nay good or bad. Even in bad masters God's authority must be honoured; for when St Paul saith, Let as many servants as are under the yoke, count their masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blafphemed, he is speaking of unbelieving and Heathen masters; as appears from what he adds in the next verse, And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them because they are brethren; by which he shews that the matters he was before speaking of were infidels; while at the same time he intimates it is no less difficult to reverence fuch masters as are truly good and Christian. It is as if he should have faid, 'Servants, I know it is a hard matter for you to reverence your masters: if they are without religion you will be ready to think, must or can I have any reverence for fuch a wicked master as this? And if your matter be a real disciple of Christ, you will be apt to forget he is your master, because as a hristian all are upon a lee vel as brethren: but whether bad or good, a disciple of Christ, or of Belial, bear an honour toward him on your heart, because God has put his authority upon him. It is a great matter, and that by which fervants do a great deal of honour to Christianity, that they esteem and reverence their masters in their hearts, whatever they be: as by a contrary conduct they bring diffrace on the name of God, and the Gospel of Jesus is evil spoken of and blasphemed.'

Secondly, This inward must, and where it is, will be accompanied by outward reverence; which lies chiefly in a reverent speaking and behaving to their masters, and a reverent speaking of them. Servants must not speak or act irreverently to their masters and mistresses, must not answer again\*, saith the Apostle, must not shew a proud, sullen, undutiful spirit. But how little is there of this Christian conduct among us? Do not the most of servants, if they be in families of higher station, shew the irreverence of their hearts by a discontented sullen countenance, and an angry surly manner of going about their work, when in any thing they are blamed or put out of their own way? And in families of a lower degree, is not the servants word as good as the masters or mistresses; are not their servants continually ready to come to terms of debate with them; and the masters often obliged to give up the matter for

peace-fake? Such fervants bewray the ungodliness and irrevetence of their hearts by fuch behaviour; and indeed have not the least regard to God's authority in the persons of their masters and mistresses. - And as servants must not behave or fpeak irreverently to their masters, so they must not speak irreverently of them. It is a very bad part in a fervant to come like a fpy into a family, to watch and observe every thing that passes, and then go whispering it about here and there without any other end to be answered but that of indulging a wanton licentious tongue, and a very wicked irreverent heart. Yet it is a most ordinary thing for servants to fpeak too forwardly of their masters when behind their backs: to proclaim their faults and weaknesses, and to blast their reputation. And this I have observed to be a very usual thing after fervants are past from one family to another, their new masters and mistresses encouraging them in it, out of a vain and finful curiofity, and not confidering that they themselves are laying a foundation for a like mifufage of themselves, when fuch graceless servants shall have been gone from them to others.

The third duty of fervants is obedience. Servants obey your masters in all things; that is, in all things that are lawful; for if your master command you to lie, swear, steal, break the Sabbath, or in any thing to trangress the Law of God, he must not be obeyed. In all things must needs reach to all such things as fall within the calling of a fervant. Though the mafter's authority doth not reach unto any that is a matter of confcience in the fervants judgement of it, as whether his fervant shall be a Papist or a Protestant, and the like, yet it absolutely reaches to all that is the proper business of a servant living in While a fervant is in a family he must submit to all orders and regulations of it regarding religion and prudence; for instance, he must attend such family worship, and observe such hours as the master of the family has seen fit to establish. And with regard to the matter of work, the servants must do as they are bid; must not be impatient of directions, nor murmur and grow peevish, if reproved. Servants must do what they are bid chearfully, confidering, that not they but their masters are to guide the house. A conceited temper in servants, leading them to do just what they will, and nothing else without heing out of humour; caufing them to treat their mafters and

mistresses orders with slight and indifference, to do what they will and when they will, to act as if there were none in the house fit to govern but themselves, and carelessly to forget in a manner whatfoever is required of them: fuch a temper shews very little sense of duty to God, or reverence to masters.-Servants, judge for yourselves, if this has not been in a greater or lesser degree your temper and conduct. Have you been possessed with such a sense of your duty to God and your masters, as has caused you to obey them in all things? Have you not been felf-willed, impatient of direction, taking your own way, oftentimes out of humour when your masters would not allow you to do as you pleased; making very light of what you were bid to do, and heedlefsly forgetting what was required of you? Forgetting, you fay! what, is there any fin in that? Yes furely, if it be out of heedlessness: for that plainly shews a want of reverence. Consider, if you have not been of this conceited disobedient spirit: and be convinced that as far as you have, you have contracted the guilt of break-

ing the fifth commandment.

I must speak a word here particularly to apprentices, who perhaps have not looked on themselves as servants, though they call those, who are over them masters; and may possibly judge themselves unconcerned with the duties of reverence and obedience here spoken of. Is not this too frequently the language of their heart, and what their conduct but evidently speaks? What care I for my master! What has he to do with me? when I have done his work; he can demand no more after that of me. I will go where I will, and come when I please; shall he tell me? I am old enough to govern myfelf, and do not want his directions. What is it to him, how much money I fpend, or what company I keep? It is onot his business how I spend the Sunday, or where I pass the evenings. He has threatened to strike me. I wish he would. 'I would-'. My dear young Friends, if there be any fuch as I have been describing present, will you consider that while you are thus behaving to your masters, you are rebelling against God. I own indeed, that through your masters want of resolution, or want of real love toward you, you may many of you do nearly what you will: but if you get the upper hand of your masters, will you be also able to do so of God? And what will you fay to him for all this irreverence and undutifulness

of yours, to them whom he has expressly charged you to honour? Nay, you may fee plainly, you are not only dishonouring and disobeying your masters, but God much more: and what think you this proud spirit of yours will end in? Be assured, it will in all probability end in your utter ruin of foul and body. If you are old and wife enough to manage yourselves, let us see you make a right use of this self-management: for depend upon it, not a truly wife foul in the world will allow you have the least measure of that wisdom you conceive belongs to you, till you have forfaken these ungodly, irreverent, and undutiful courses.—Such young persons as these are the objects of the greatest compassion; and all concerned with them or for them, should exert themselves to rescue them from so dangerous a condition. Their parents especially should use all their authority; lest they also by and by become slighted by them, and lose all power of doing them any good. But,

Fourthly, Another duty of servants is honesty. Not purloining, but shewing all good faithfulness. It is the property of a faithful fervant to be true to his trust, not to convert to his own profit what belongs to his master and is committed to his care; to be diligent too at his work, that he may render to his mafter that for which he pays him; nay, and to be as thrifty of what is his master's as if it were his own. These three things then fall under the title of honesty in servants, a clean hand, in-

dustrious labour, and a saving thriftiness.

1. Servants must have a clean hand. Picking and stealing is most abominable in servants, and incomparably worse in them than in any others. When a person is taken into the house, as one of the family, and intrusted with so much of what is there; when the mafter giveth him his wages, and provides for him every thing needful for comfortable fublistence; then to fall a pilfering and plundering: this is theft of an enormous kind. If any servants have sinned this great sin, let them as they value their fouls make restitution according to their power. In the law of Moses the matter of restitution stood thus, He shall recompense his trespass with the principal thereof, add unto it the fifth part thereof, and give it unto him, against whom he hath trespaffed\*. But if any, whether fervant or other, keep what they have stolen, they will be fure to keep God's curse along with

it: for so it is said in the prophet Zechariah, I will bring it forth, saith the Lord of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief; and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it,

with the timber thereof, and the Itones thereof\*.

2. Servants must be industrious. This is another branch of honesty in them. They may not be idle, consuming much, and working little. They are hired, and ought to labour. And if they do not, their masters are as much defrauded as if they were actually robbed. If you are a slothful servant, I beseech you with what face can you ask your master to pay you your wages, when you know you have not earned them? And what is here said, does as much affect such as are hired by the day,

as any other servants.

3. Also servants must be thrifty, taking care of their masters interests, as they would do their own: they must content themselves with such necessary things as are allowed, and not think it is all their own, as we say; they must not carelessly waste and destroy any thing, because not they but their masters must provide more; they must not take the liberty of giving away what is not permitted; nor, as the manner of some is, make spoil of what is their master's in riotous entertainments among their companions. Any thing of this is dishonest, and shews a servant has not either much conscience toward God, or regard for his master.

So you see the honesty and faithfulness of servants is of pretty large extent. It greatly demands their consideration: both on account of their duty towards God, and their interest in the world, which has the nearest relation with their integrity and

faithfulness .- I faid in the

Fifth and last place, that it was the duty of fervants to pray for their masters, and for the success of their masters business in their hands. This, at least to the servants themselves, may be a good proof of the conscience they make of their calling, and of the care they have to glorify God in it. You may see +, a very devout prayer to this purpose made by Abraham's servant, when he was sent upon an important business by this master. And I suppose you will hardly think, that when the Lord made what-

eve:

<sup>\*</sup> Zech. iii. 4.

ever Joseph did to prosper in his hands, and blessed his master the Egyptian's house, for Joseph's fake, that both the one and the other were not commended to God by him in daily prayer. Indeed it cannot be well feen how they can be christian fervants, who in a confidence of their own strength and sufficiency, and not calling on the Lord for help, are going on with the whole work of their calling. Now then, you have found much cause of condemnation from one and another of those duties which I-have been laying before you. You have not as you ought had an eye to God in your service; you have failed prodigiously of inward and outward reverence; you have been fadly felf-willed and impatient; nay you have not been fo honest as you ought, at least in the articles of diligence and thriftiness. But have you not to add to all these, that your calling has not been fanctified as it should have been by diligent daily prayer? And may not this have been the main cause also that you have so greatly failed in those other duties of your calling? Yes verily; and I will add farther, that you ought to charge it to your neglect herein, that you have met with all those crosses and disappointments you are ready to complain of; for I know not that there is a promife made in Scripture of any bleffing that is not prayed for.

On the whole, you cannot but fee how content and happy the practice of your duty in the instances mentioned would render you in your calling, though in some respects service may seem to you clogged with peculiar inconveniencies. It is the calling God has placed you in; and let that satisfy you. Let it be your care to do your duty in it as becomes the servant of the Lord, and in the end, if you are faithful, God will not for-

get you in Jesus Christ.

No. 5. SER-

# SERMON XXXVI.

## GALATIANS iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

TREATED last of the duty of servants toward their masters; and am now to speak, on the other side, of the duties of masters. Servants, it was shewn, must serve God in their calling, so must their masters also; servants must reverence their masters because God hath put his authority upon them; and masters must therefore use that authority in such manner as that God may be glorified by it; fervants must be obedient to their masters orders, therefore masters must be mild and reasonable in them; servants must be faithful, and masters must be kind; fervants must pray for their masters, and masters in their turn must watch over their servants souls. It is impossible not to remark in the confideration of those relative duties which the law requires of us, how exactly suited to promote the happiness and well-being of society our religion is; seeing it interposes a divine authority to restrain the violence of our corrupted hearts, and lays us under a curfe for our failures in duty one toward another, just as it does for our fins committed immediately against God himself. Servants must act their parts becomingly to their masters, and they again to them, under divine penalties; nor shall transgressions of this kind any more than those directly against God, be blotted out and pardoned, but through the blood of Christ humbly and penitently appli-To fay the whole, there is fuch an intimate relation between God's glory and our happiness, as that the one may not be severed from the other: and in the instances of the very lowest kind, where the glory of God demands obedience from us, we shall find that obedience producing the happiest effects

effects even upon our present ease and quiet. Particularly, in that family, where the fear of the Lord influences all the members to a religious discharge of the duties of their several stations in it, there will be found a most desirable and delight-

ful peace.

But to come to the duties of masters. I observe by way of introduction, that it is the part of a religious mafter with good advice to make choice of the fervants he takes into his family. He that walketh in a perfect way, faith David, he shall serve me. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell in my house; he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my fight\*. David would have none but religious persons for his servants; no proud, lying, swearing, ungodly persons should harbour there under his roof. And with good reason: for how could he think they would serve him well, who ferved God fo ill? He would not bring a leprofy within his walls to infect his children and the other fervants: nor venture to take the curfe of God into his house, together with the wicked fervant he admits into it. This is the foundation; there must be a good choice made of servants; and the masters must look to it, that he hire none for servants whose conduct shews they do not fear God. If we have failed here we have fet out wrong; and I date fay shall be found to have done very little of that duty God requires at our hands as malters of families. What that duty is, I come now to explain under the particulars above-mentioned. And,

First, It is the duty of masters to serve God in that calling; and a very important calling it is, that of a master of a family. For the whole world is but a collection of families under the direction of their respective heads: and as these are nurseries of religion or vice, so in general must the world be. There cannot therefore be any private trust of such moment as that of a family-governor; as also the account to be rendered up of it must be of the last importance to our souls. Upon the faithfulness or remissness of the master, the state of the samily will unavoidably turn; be orderly and exemplary on the one hand, or a harbour of licentiousness, riot and wickedness on the other: wherefore when God distributed the world of men into rich and poor, superiors and inferiors, it was not, but upon a wise design for the better ordering his government

among us. He has not admitted that we should be all equal. that there might not be an universal confusion: but by leaving the most in a state of necessity, he has put the many into the hands of the few; and has itrictly enjoined thefe to look well to the charge he hath committed to them. The most natural and immediate relation that is caused by this inequality is that of masters and servants; and therefore according to God's general defign in this un-qual distribution of circumstances, it is easy to fee how much rests on the head of a family governor, and how much it behoves him to ferve God in that particular and important calling. It is a question therefore of great moment to all masters, whether they have been serving God or themselves in that relation. If there hath been no confideration of the trust committed to masters, nor view to serve God in that station; the charge is heavy, and the guilt great, as the confequences must have been very hurtful to the interests of God in the But to come nearer to the present subject :-

Secondly, It is the duty of malters to use that authority God hath given them over their servants to his glory. The master must be truly sensible of God's design in putting authority over servants into his hands; that it is not for the master's sake, but God's; not that the master might take his ease and be attended as though the lower fort of people were made for that purpose, but that by a righteous use of the authority received, the honour of God might be maintained in the samily. Hence in all respects in which the master's conduct and government may have any tendency to promote the honour of God by the influence the one and the other must have on the servants, it is his duty so to behave and govern. These therefore should be

leading inquiries with a master of a family:

First, What influence will my own conduct have upon my fervants; Do they fee in me every thing that would recommend religion to them? That I honour it, that I believe it, that I practife it, that I make no account of wealth and honour in comparison with it, that I really facrifice every thing to it? Have all that were ever fervants in my house feen this in me? And have they never any of them seen in my conduct any thing which had a tendency to lessen their regard for God, or to harden them in sin? Did they ever see in any instance an example of drunkenness, swearing, sabbath-breaking, covetousness, or whatever else was contrary to the conduct of a Christian?

Or

Or have they ever found me countenancing any of these sinful practices in others within my walls? Masters, as far you have failed in these points, you have not used your authority to the

glory of God.

The second leading question is this, Is my government in the family such as might best serve to promote religion among my fervants? Particularly, have they seen this to be my great aim in all my family discipline? And that the worship of God, and the maintenance of all good order have been prevailing objects of attention? That I would admit no manner of vice; and that my servants must either reform or leave me?—And,

Thirdly, Am I able to fay I have used all the influence my station has given me with my fervants, to lead them into and encourage them in the ways of Christian godliness? Have I obliged them as far as I might to a religious observance of the Sabbath at church and at home; both providing they might as much as possible attend the former, and not allowing them to idle about from the latter on that day? Have I been at any pains to instruct them; and given them convenient opportunities for private prayer? Have I encouraged them in doing well; and reproved them for doing ill? In all careful not to give up my authority by an unpardonable remissness and want of resolution? Most especially have my orders at no time been contrary to any of these things; such as brought them under a necessity, if they would avoid my displeasure, to lie, deceive, cheat, break the Sabbath?—Such as these are very interesting inquiries; and which will eafily help masters and mistresses of families to discover how far short they have come of using their authority over their fervants, to the glory of God, in their fervants spiritual profit.

Thirdly, It is the duty of masters to be mild in their carriage, and reasonable in their commands. Ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatning, knowing that your master is in heaven: neither is there respect of persons with him\*. Masters must not be tyrants, nor servants treated like slaves. Masters must endeavour to make their servants labour as easy to them as they can; not laying more on them than they can well do; not taking up every mistake and indiscretion to scold and rate them for; not hasty and apt to see every fault, nor provoking

them

them to wrath by unfeafonable warmth upon every cause. However it may feem, it is at least as difficult a matter to be a good master as a good servant; not less contrary to our hearts to command, than to obey, with a proper temper. Many mafters and mistresses are indiscreet in their giving directions, so that fervants know not what they have to do, and in what order of time; from hence many things will come upon their hands at once, some of which must needs be neglected or done amiss; and then the servants shall suffer blame for the master's imprudence. Nay and some masters or mistresses will be indulging a temper of finding fault, and be continually watching occasions against servants to scold them, as if it were the property of good and notable masters and mistresses to make their fervants stations constantly uneasy and uncomfortable to them. Others again carry it with too high a hand toward their fervants, domineering over them as if they were brutes, infomuch that the fervants tremble to be near them. And others shall be expecting from them what is beyond their parts and abilities, and opportunities of improvement; which not considered, that shall be often treated as a crime, which in truth was but the effect of pure ignorance. In all fuch cases, felf-will breaking out, shews how difficult a thing it is to exercife christian meekness and moderation toward those who are in subjection to us. Let only that word be remembered by masters, Knowing that your master also is in heaven: neither is there respect of persons with him; and then how utterly inexcusable will their want of meekness and moderation towards their fervants appear even to themselves. Your master is in heaven, you have often provoked him, you are daily provoking him, yet he hath not dealt with you as you deferve, but is patient, gentle, forbearing towards you; confider then that your fervants are as dear to him as you can be, and fay how you can answer for such a treatment of them as he does not exercise towards you, and your case would be miserable if he did. This is the force of the argument; which you fee is exactly fitted to shew the unhumbled pride of their hearts, who instead of fhewing gentlenefs, mildnefs and forbearance, toward thofe, who must in a manner bear whatever treatment their masters and mistresses see fit, do behave toward them with severity, roughness and cruelty.

Fourthly, Is is the duty of masters to be honest and kind

towards their fervants, which is but an equal return for their faithfulness and service to them. I say the service in point of honesty intitles to the wages, and steady exemplary faithfulness to somewhat more. But I will mention them both under the fame head, because kindness seems to be but a fort of honesty towards a good fervant. Masters must be honest towards their fervants, paying them their wages, and that in due time. There are so many passages in Scripture on this head, as plainly to shew that, whatever may be the case now, yet there have been times when fervants have been grievously oppressed this way. Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are orrupted, and your garments are moth eaten. Your gold and filver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire; ye have heaped a treasure together for the last days\*. Why, what is the cause of all the dreadful declarations of wrath? It follows in the next verse: Behold, the hire of the labourers, which have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped, are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Such another declaration I find in Malachi, God will be a swift witness against them that oppress the hireling in his wagest. And in Jeremiah, Wo be to him that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his workt. Masters therefore must needs give unto their servants that which is just and equal. Now what is that? Their wages without dispute, and that in due feason, and willingly, not causing their servants to sue for what they have honestly earned, as if they were claiming what they had no right to. But what besides wages? It is just and equal that fervants have wholesome provisions, and such as is fufficient for them. It is just and equal also they have sufficient time for fleep, and some time for relaxation; and, as I faid before, convenient space daily for private exercises of worship. But is this all; doth justice and equity require no more? at least, doth the duty and law of kindness demand no more? You shall judge for yourselves. I find the story in the Gospel, that a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was fick and ready to die. Hearing of Jesus, the cen-Y 4

\* James v. 1—4 † Malachi iii. 5.

turion fends to him the elder of the Fews, befeeching him that he would come and heal his fervant. You may fee in the history how pressing they were upon the occasion; and that himself would have come, but he did not judge himself worthy; for it was that alone, and not want of love to his servant, that detained him at home. Yet observe, he was a man of no fmall confideration; he was very wealthy and had built them a synagogue, and one that had many at his command. Now judge you: did this centurion well in taking this care for his fick servant? Doubtless you say he did. Why then you confess it is just and equal you should take what reasonable care is in your power of your fervants, when they are in fickness. And what then shall we think of such masters as grudge their fervants what they eat and drink at fuch feafons, and murmur that now they are nothing but a burden, and perhaps unmercifully ftop their wages; and all through a miferable covetouf. ness?-But is this all? Is nothing due to those who have been long and faithful fervants to their masters, and are now grown out in their fervice? Indeed now-a-days it is rarely there is any fuch thing. Servants are shifted and changed so often, that no affection grows on the one part or the other: which is a thing very unbecoming. But where lies the blame of it? Masters fay, in the servants; and servants say, in the masters. I suppose they are both in the right, and that both are in fault; while on each fide the one has contributed to make the other worfe. Nevertheless this is not always the case: there are those who grow old in the fervice of the mafter: and what is due to them? Methinks they are grown into a kind of nearer relalation than that of fervants; and have a very fair title to their mafters liberality, when they have painfully and faithfully worn out their strength in his service. It was ordered in the law, that at the feventh year, when fervants were discharged, the master should not send his servant away empty, Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and cut of thy wine-press: of that wherewith the Lord thy God hath bleffed thee, thou shalt give unto him\*. And this you will own is a worthy pattern for christian masters to follow. But,

Fifthly and Lasty, It is the duty of masters to watch over their servants souls. This is a principal duty of masters, how-

ever little it may be regarded. God fays of Abraham as a principal branch of that believer's character, I know that he will command his houshold, that they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgement+. Like a good master he would use his authority over his fervants to engage them in God's ways. But was this all? Would he not instruct them, think you, what these ways of the Lord were? And would he not carefully observe their behaviour, whether they were walking in these ways or not? And when at any time he saw them going out of these ways, would he not warn them of it, and as need was, reprove and correct them for it, and take all the pains and care he could to bring them back again into the right way? Yes, you fay; else he had shewn no zeal for God, nor true love for his fervants. But now, mafters, what was Abraham's practice; is not the fame also your duty? But have you walked in the fteps of faithful Abraham? Have you used all your authority over your fervants to lead them into God's ways? But moreover, have you instructed them as Abraham did in the ways of godliness? Why should you not? You are not greater nor richer than was Abraham. Or, fay you are, you cannot be too great to ferve your mafter which is in heaven. It was an old custom with masters and mistresses themselves to teach their fervants the principles of the christian religion, by hearing, and explaining to them the catechism at all convenient sea-. fons; and then also to question them upon their return from church concerning what they had been doing and hearing there. This was acting like Abraham: but have you been at fuch pains with your fervants? And have you also carefully observed their behaviour; warned them of what you faw amifs in it; and as need was, reproved them sharply, shewing yourself more displeased at them for their fins than for every thing befides; and in a word used all the means you could to do them fervice in their most important interests? To do this is to act like a father of a family; and whoever hath laboured herein hath not repented, I am confident, of the pains he hath taken this way.

Thus now I have fet before you the duty of masters. It remains only to sum up the inquiries as to your discharge of it. See, masters and mistresses, have you, as you ought, served

God in your place and calling? Laying afide felfish and byends, have you niways and in every case acted with this view, that you might glorify God in the use of that authority he hath put into your hands over your fervants? Have you also at all times been mild and reasonable with them, not indulging your own will in the exercise of your power over them? And have you shewn them not only all manner of honesty, but of kindness, in dealing by them as was just and equal? Withal, have you watched carefully and as a father over their fouls, instructing, reproving, admonishing them? What master will fay, All this have I done from my first hour of my being in 'that relation? What master will not rather fay, In this duty I have been exceedingly deficient, negligent and blameworthy? And if fo, should not such a matter be laid to heart, the curse of the law be apprehended, and the blood of Christ, according to the defign of the text, be applied to, for cleanfing from fuch guilt? If we were not guilty there would be no need of Christ; but since we are, we must either perish or come to him, crying, I have finned; Lord, have mercy upon me.

Nor is this all. The law is a rule, as well as a schoolmaster; a humble endeavour through faith in Christ's blood, and by his Spirit, to conform to it as a rule, is our bounden Christian duty, and what will certainly be expected at our hands at the day of account. To as many masters therefore as are really walking according to this rule of their duty now laid before them, with a sense of their impersection therein, real sorrow for that impersection, and humble dependence on the righteousness of Christ for pardon thereof, I may truly say, Peace be unto them, for they are of the true Israel of God; and may exhort them to abound therein more and more, to the manifestation of God's glory, to the furtherance of the salvation of souls, and to the increase of their joy in the day of

the Lord Jesus Christ.

## SERMON XXXVII.

### GALATIANS iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

IN profecuting the relative duties required by the fifth commandment, we have confidered already the family relations of parents and children, and of masters and servants; so we come now, in the

Third place, to speak to the relation substitting between hufbands and wives, and the duties of both. Two or three obfervations will pave a way to the clearer apprehension of this

fubject.

First, Marriage is purely and wholly a divine inftitution. Though natural propensities must needs have led those of either sex to hold intercourse one with the other; yet it was only the appointment of God which could beget that special relation between a man and woman, by which their persons, circumstances and interests are mutually regarded as one. So we find though God made Adam and Eve, yet by a distinct and particular act afterwards, he joined them together in marriage. He brought her unto the man; that is, to be his wife. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and sless of my sless.

Secondly, The defign of this inflitution was God's glory, in preferving the chastity of our minds in the procreation of children: and in such a religious dwelling together of the parties, as might best tend to the pious education of those children, as well as to the greater comfort and also spiritual profiting of the parties themselves, together with the influence they

should now have on others as a family.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, That in order to these ends God has bound up the parties respectively by his own express authority; giving such commands to both and to each, as have the plainest tendency to effect them Thus, feeing one end of marriage is the preservation of chartiry in the procreation of children, he hath guarded the marriage-bed by the most direct prohibitions. And feeing the other end of it is family government, by which the pious education of children is provided for, he hath put authority upon the man over the woman yet so restrained by the obligations of love and tenderness, that while there should be submission on the one side, there should be no tyranny on the other. Government supposes inferiority; and the pre-eminence in the matrimonial union, is apparent from the very order and manner of their creation, as St Faul observes, 1 Tim. ii. 13. Where the apottle sufficiently intimates with which of the two the authority should remain.

Fourthly, It can only be in a rengious regard to these ends which infinite wisdom had in view in the institution of marriage, that God can be gloristed by persons in this relation—This is the plain consequence of what has been advanced.—For if marriage be simply and only an institution of God for the preservation of chastity, and for the blessings of samily government to the parties themselves, and to their children; and if such ends cannot be effected, but by the observance of such rules as God has given in the case, on the one part and the other; then the transgression of these rules must be the subversion of God's design, and sinning against his institu-

tion. Wherefore,

Fiftbly, The inquiry is, What are these rules which God hath prescribed to persons in the state of matrimony, for the preservation of chastity, and for the maintenance and surtherance of his glory, in the good order of family government, by which the children are religiously educated? My answer is this. You have a comprehensive view of matrimonial duties, in that which is signified and represented by a state of marriage; namely, the spiritual marriage and unity that there is betwixt Christ and his church. And here,

First, Of the duties common to both husband and wife.—Betwixt Christ and the church there is union and communion. This is a great mystery,'\* faith the apostle; the union be-

tween Christ and believers, who are so strictly united together as to be one. We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bonest.' And out of this union, of course, fprings communion. Christ's things are the believers things. and the believer is Christ's, to hold, use, and enjoy at his will. But though there be a great mystery in the spiritual union and communion betwixt Christ and the church, the figure which represents it, marriage, is plain enough. By God's inftitution, the man and woman, in marriage, are made one; as one they must regard themselves. The man is the woman's, and the woman is the man's. The man is the woman's in fuch manner as to let no other have a part in him as a husband; and so the woman is the man's in such fort, as to belong wholly to the man in quality of a wife. Confequently, by the act of marriage, there is a furrender made of the perfon mutually by the one to the other. And out of this grows communion; whatever is the woman's becomes the man's. and what is the man's becomes the woman's, jointly to use and enjoy. Wherefore,

First, It is the duty of married persons to regard each other as one: for Christ and the church are one; and the husband and the wife are one. They must regard themselves as parts one of another. And this regard must be very tender and affectionate. A man shall leave his father and mother. and be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.'+ They must regard each other as one slesh. But do they fo, when they are selfish, making, as it were, separate interests, and each so caring for self, as to have little care for the other? Do they regard each other as one flesh, when they fall to finful contentions and brawlings, the man tyrannically ufing his superiority in violence and bitterness, and the woman making up her want of strength, by anger and fury, to the destruction of family peace, to the very great hurt and hinderance of their children, and to the wounding their own fouls, by the violation of matrimonial obligations? Do they regard each other as one flesh, when they have no liking to each other's company, when home is worse than a prison to the husband. and the wife is never easy but when he is out of her way?

Secondly, If man and wife are one, as Christ and the church

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are one, they must not only regard each other as one, but affor endeavour to promote the prefent and eternal happiness of each other to the utmost of their power. They must labour to please one another, and make their lives mutually comfortable; yea, and especially to work for the spiritual profiting one of the other. It is an ill token of their regarding each other as one flesh, when they do not study to please, and be agreeable the one to the other, but are continually thwarting as if they came together to be a mutual vexation. It is a much worse token. when, instead of helping, they are an hinderance to each others fouls; feldom or ever a ferious word passing between them, never warning each other against whatever finful tempers or practices, any farther than their own respective ease or humours are croffed by them, and leading fuch careless and ungodly lives as mightily tend to quench any little meafures of feriousness there might be in either of them, and to harden one the other into a total forgetfulness of God?

Thirdly, If man and wife are one, they must especially help to bear each others burdens. It was a fad part in Job's wife. when God's hand was against him, to be against him too .-She, of all his family, was left to comfort him, but she proved a poor comforter; instead of supporting him, she comes with her peevish counsel, 'Curse God, and die:' when all was gone already but God's favour, she would needs he should wilfully throw away that too. Desperate counsels, and angry reproaches, are, I fear, the too frequent consolations ministered from one to the other, in the calamities attending a married state. Elkanah's conduct to his wife Hannah, in their common affliction, is an excellent pattern of matrimonial tenderness: 'Hannah, why weepest thou? And why eatest thou onot? And why is thy heart grieved? Am not I better unto

• thee than ten fons?"\*

Fourthly, If husband and wife are one, they must exercise much patience and forbearance the one with the other. It is an unnatural thing for a man to be angry with his own flesh. And what good can come of it, if he is so? Yet in this state there is much occasion for patience: for infirmities and sins there will be in both, cross accidents in the family of greater or less importance, loss and disappointment in worldly businefs; with many other things which will be apt to ftir up the heart of the one against the other, and to breed uneasiness.—
Nevertheless they two are but one flesh, and should not tear and devour one the other; laying the fault each upon the other, as they commonly do when any thing goes amiss. This is all contrary to matrimonial union, by which the parties are joined together as they are; not two angels met together in the matrimonial state, but a son and daughter of sinful Adam, from both of whom must be expected infirmities, frailties,

imperfections, passions, and provocations.

And, Lastly, If a man and wife be one even as Christ and the church are, then they must be faithful the one to the other. They must be faithful to the marriage-bed. It is a capital sin against the institution of marriage, that either party should in anywife separate from the matrimonial vows and obligations in this respect; and however the world thinks of it, it is as great a crime in the man as the woman. A crime which however it may be artfully concealed from the eyes of men, yet it is noted by the eye of God, who hath declared that 'Whoremongers and adulterers he will judge' in the last day.-They must be faithful in respect of family concerns; neither the husband idle and unthrifty, nor the wife prodigal and Aothful; but having regard to their common happiness and welfare, as being alike interested. Nay, they must be faithful to each others fecrets. There should be much freedom of heart between them; as they are one, they will be likely to keep little to themselves, and what they intrust one to the other, should be kept with a becoming prudence and secrecy.

The duties I have now been reckoning under this first head, as they evidently rise from the matrimonial union, so do they regard both the husband and wife. I come now,

And these, I think, are very discernably plain on the one part and the other, from the conduct of Christ and the church one towards the other, which is represented by the state of marriage. Whatever is the temper and conduct of Christ to the church, such is the duty of the husband towards the wife; as on the other side, the duty of the church to Christ, marks out the duty of wives towards their husbands. Now the temper wherewith Christ governs the church is love, using his dominion for God's glory with all gentleness. And what of

his conduct comes within the present representation, seems to fall under the three heads of direction, provision, and forbearance. Christ uses his authority for the glory of God in directing, providing for, and bearing with the church. And so the church's duty, on the other part, is, with affectionate submission to obey Christ's direction, to improve his provision, and to be thankfully sensible of his forbearance. So we have here before us the special duties of husbands and wives;—namely,

First, Husbands must love their wives, and wives must reve-

rence their husbands.

Secondly, Husbands must direct, and wives must obey them.

Thirdly, Husbands must provide, and wives must prudently manage that provision.

Fourthly, Husbands must bear with their wives, and they

in return must lovingly help them.

The first of these special duties is, husbands must love their wives, and wives must reverence their husbands.-Husbands must love their wives. This is the temper of Christ toward the church his spouse. He doth not exercise his authority, but for the glory of God and for her welfare. And accordingly this is the pattern fet out to husbands to walk by. Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church.'\* And again, Love your wives, and be not bitter against them.+' Do not use your authority to exalt yourself, but to the glory of God; nor be a tyrant instead of an husband. This would be a strange abuse of God's design in putting authority into your hand Yet it is fuch an abuse as the heart of man is directly liable to; which is ever ready to forget the defign of God, in the use of the things received from him, and to turn them all to licentiousness. Perhaps in few cases is this more frequent, than in that before us. Husbands will have their will, because they will; without any regard to God, or respect to his gracious purpose in the appointment of family government: as if power were given them to gratify their pride, and others were ordained of God to be their Laves. Such a temper is intolerable even towards the meanest fervant; but how much more so toward the wife of a man's

bosom? Why, you churlish Nabals, when you married your wives, did you or they mean and contract that they were to be indeed flaves to you; that they were to tremble at every look of you, never to hear a kind word from you, and to be dealt with as those over whom you were licensed to rule with a rod of iron? They cannot easily help themselves it is true. but must bear all your ill treatment; nevertheless, God will help them; he will certainly reward on your heads fo horrid an abuse of that authority he has put into your hands. All you, therefore, that are husbands, or have been fo, confider with what temper you have conducted yourselves in that relation? Have you not more or less behaved rashly, and roughly, and unkindly? Have you loved your wives? always loved them? never been bitter against them? But more, have you held and used your authority for God's glory, and the good of those in fubjection to you? The question is not simply, have you been kind to your wives? but have you exercised your authority with kindness, as Christ doth his? A mere fond kindness, growing out of constitution, or animal affection, a kindness for quietness sake, will not answer God's demands. The point is, whether you have endeavoured to preferve and execute the authority God put into your hands; and whether you did it with love? As Christ does not lay aside his government over the church, but uses it in all gentleness and tenderness of affection.

On the other fide, the temper of wives towards their hufbands must be reverent. Let the wife see that she revererence her husband? Wives must consider God's authority in the person of their husbands, as the proper ground of a religious reverence. It will stand upon nothing else but this.—For if the reverence of the wife to her husband do rest on his station, or sense, or knowledge, or piety; take all these away, and she will have no reverence for him at all. She must reverence him as her husband, for that consideration solely, because he is her husband; that is, because God hath put authority upon the husband in regard of his wise, and she, by her own consent in matrimony, hath put herself into this relation. However, therefore, matters prove after marriage, the must bear reverently upon her heart the sense of her being

in subjection to the man as a husband; and that reverential fense of his authority must be shewn in all her conduct toward him. If, therefore, at any time the despites him in her heart, because of any supposed or real weakness, infirmity, or fin, as did Michal, Saul's daughter, respecting her husband David, when in her judgment he made himself a fool, by dancing before the ark, the fins. Nay, you fay, but he is indifcreet, rash; or perhaps you will say, he abuses his authority, and treats you unkindly! this, and a great deal more may be true. he may be poor withal, and despised in the eyes of the world: yet the answer still returns, he is your husband, and in that capacity bears God's authority toward you; upon which account your reverence is due to him, and is not suspended upon other aecidental circumstances. When, therefore, you have behaved irreverently towards your husband in thought, word, or deed, upon any, whether imaginary or real provocation, you have finned against God's authority. But now is this reverence confiftent with those fullen peevishnesses, furious countenances, angry speeches, uttered with vehement indignation, and clamorous voice, that are too often found in the conduct of wives? Surely here is not the least footstep of reverence. If ever there was any, it is all swallowed up by that pride of felf-will, which infifts on equality at least, if not pre-eminence. Cast up now your accounts on your parts, and fee if there be no charge against you on the score of irreverence toward your husbands. Possibly you have seen them deficient in the duty of love; examine now if they have not, yea rather, if God hath not, feen you defective on your part, in the duty of reverence: for, that husbands love their wives, and wives reverence their husbands, is the express command of God, for the transgression of which both the one and the other must be answerable.

I conclude for the morning, with this observation of the Psalmist, exemplified in the case now under consideration, By thy commandments I get understanding.' So we easily may, as of the strictness and holiness of the law, so of the sinfulness of our depraved nature. Nor let us quarrel with the law for its purity and holiness. We cannot but approve it, though it condemns us so much, and though we find ourfelvess.

felves fo utterly incapable of answering its demands. To what a bleffed condition shall we be arrived when all that the law requires shall be found perfectly wrought into our hearts! That will not be yet. We must wait for another world for that perfection. But in the mean time, let us thankfully receive that pardon, and diligently improve that grace, both which are purchased for us, and offered to us, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Secondly, The next special duty is this, as it is the office of Christ to direct the church, and the duty of the church to obey his directions; fo it is the office of the husband to order and dispose in the government of the family, and the duty of the wife to submit to such directions. It is the duty of the husband to order in the government of the family. And it behoves him to do it with much advisedness; not consulting his own will, but God's glory, in that little fociety over which God has placed him I fay, he must have in his eye God's glory, and be guided thereby in the whole discipline of the house, that the spiritual and temporal benefit thereof may be promoted. This I have mentioned already in a former difcourfe, and repeat here, with a view of shewing the true nature of the husband's authority over the wife in point of orders. It is true, the husband's will is the wife's rule of duty, fo far as there is no interfering with the law of God. But then alfo the law of God is the husband's rule, from which, if at any time he step aside in his injunctions, the wife not only may, but must refuse compliance in the spirit of meekness .-God has laid it on the husband to govern; and at his hand will require it, if he have made his own wilful humour, and not the glory of God, and the benefit of the family, the meafure by which he hath been guided. Indeed his charge here is very interesting; and he shall need sue with much importunity to the throne of grace, that his own will may be mortified, and that he may be directed himself to dispose all things within his house, in the manner that shall best conduce to God's glory. In which good work also it is the duty of the wife to affist him by her prayers and counsels: but by no means to step into his place, and take the direction out of his hand. is a subject in the family; and her duty is to be foremost in fubmitting to the directions given by the head of it; which also it is her business to observe with a submission proportionable to the importance of them in the judgment of her husband. Yea, and even in leffer things, which feem not of much moment, her compliance will be both most fatisfactory to her own mind, and most conducive to establish the governor's authority over children and fervants. This latter confideration ought to have much weight with the wife; she should labour to establish and strengthen the husband's authority; the readiest way of doing which, is by the strictness of her conformity to his directions; with which if she be found to take liberty, the inferiors will be very ready to do the same.

This, in thort, is the duty of husbands and wives respecting government and submission; upon which every one knows the scriptures lay much stress. 'Ye husbands, dwell with your wives according to knowledge. \*\* Now is this the very thing I have been speaking of; husbands must exercise their Christian authority with all wisdom. 'Ye wives, be in sube jection to your own husbands; + and fubmit yourselves to them as it is fit in the Lord.'t Let conscience, therefore, fay whether this hath been wrought on the one part and the other. Hath the husband never been licentious in command, the wife lawless in submission; both misguided by their own will? Hath the latter, at no time, made compliance with finful orders to please and pacify her husband; nor the former given up his authority, and let things go as they will, to please his wife? In short, has the one always acted like a kind Abraham, the other like a submissive Sarah, in the matter of family difpensation.

Thirdly, Husbands must provide, and wives must manage that provision with thristiness and care. This regards their respective duties in the maintenance of the family. The care of getting lies on the husband. He must not be idle, but labour for the support of those who are his, in a decent manner becoming their and his station. It is an ill husband that takes no pains about such provision; cares not what becomes of the wife and family at home, so he may have wherewith to indulge his lusts abroad in rioting, drunkenness, and pleasure; never takes up a thought how his children and wife shall be supported when he is dead, but is an idle squanderer of what

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he has and what he gets. This is an ill, a cruel, an unnatural husband; 'he is worse than an insidel;'\* the scripture plainly tells him in fo many words. Yet how common a character is this! fuch husbands are to be found in every part. They marry to gratify their carnal inclinations; which done. they have evidently no concern about their families, nor love for their wives; would gladly leave them to the wide world, were it not through fear or shame, (indeed many such ungodly spendthrifts do this to the great burden of others) and are very content to fee them starving, while themselves can riot with their drunken abominable companions. It is not easy to conceive a more brutal character than this. Yet how common! what among the lower fort only? Truly no. are those of higher station who consume their substance in idle riotous living, neglect all their concerns, mind nothing but gaming, or company-keeping, or pleasure, and reduce their families to beggary by their own finful extravagance.— Let the wife be what she will, all must come to ruin in such circumstances. And I have always thought such wives the first among all the objects of compassion, especially because their condition, though bad enough, is made worse by the unkind and brutal treatment which their husbands too commonly add to all the mifery they have brought them to by their idleness and extravagance. It is the husband's duty, therefore, to make provision for the family; and then it is alfo the wife's to manage it in the house with care and decency. The wife must not squander what the husband earns, must not, through a vain affectation of making a figure, spend more in the family than he can prudently afford; must not always be calling, give, give, but must manage and order according to his abilities. There is much mischief of this kind done also by the heedlessness and other evil qualities of wives. They have not many times a due regard to their place and calling, which is to look after the house; are idle, are too proud to fubmit to fuch employment, have an eye to nothing, and let all go as it will, 'do not keep at home,' as the apostle advises, but behave so unprofitably in their calling, that let the husband provide what he can, all shall not be sufficient. His gains are like fand thrown into a sieve; all goes through.

through. Whether husbands and wives have not fomewhat to answer for on this head, I leave themselves to determine; while I just observe there is another extreme, when the husband will not afford what is sufficient, or the wife will not use it through distrust of God's providence, and desire of vain

glory.

Fourthly and lastly, It is the duty of husbands to bear with their wives, and of the wife to help them with all loving affection. The apostle calls the wife 'the weaker vessel,'\* and as fuch, enjoins that 'honour should be given her.' Christ bears with the church, and so must the husband do with the wife. Forbearance is the duty of the head; the office of the inferior is fubmission. Now as Christ manifestly sees innumerable faults, blemishes, and miscarriages in the church, yet doth not for that come to hasty terms with his spouse, but affectionately loving her, doth wait upon her with meekness, and is continually doing her good: fo herein is an example for husbands, though they fee many defects in their wives; they must be gentle toward them, and if they have more knowledge must use all kind and gracious methods to do them service, and to bring them off from any wrong courses. Nothing can vindicate the husband in using any violence towards his wife; it is as if a man should tear and rend his own flesh. • He must nourish and cherish her, as Christ does the church.'+ He must consider his own sins, and see how God bears with him; and hereby he must be wrought up to such a kindness and sweetness of temper and conduct, as is most likely to effect the reformation of whatever is amiss in his wife. This duty requires, as much as it forbids, that roughness wherewith many husbands are wont to come upon their wives for every indifcretion. Mean time the wife must not take advantage of the husband's gentleness to grow upon him, but must study to reform whatever contrary to God's word he disapproves, that she may keep and increase the love of his heart towards her; than which nothing should be more the object of her concern and care. Love in matrimony is a tender thing, jealous, and fuch as will wear out if it be not continually fed by kind endeavours on each part. So that both must look to it, that they do not lose the heart one of the other, than which nothing

nothing should be more deeply dreaded; because if this once be the case, nothing but vexation may be expected, and it will be no easy thing to regain the lost affection. So that wives must not presume on their husbands kindness, but study to please, and be agreeable to them, by conforming to their lawful inclinations, helping them in their cares, and partaking with them in their griefs. Such kindness in the man, and amiableness in the woman, will mightily knit their hearts together, and abundantly contribute to their helpfulness one to the other, in all concerns spiritual and temporal. To the enlargement of which matrimonial love, it will behove them efpecially to pray with and for each other: for it is God's bleffing alone that can make them comfortable partners, their affairs prosperous, and above all, their souls to thrive in this matrimonial state, in such manner, that by their godly living together in this world, in the world to come they may have

life everlasting.

I have reckoned up now the principal duties of the married state; by which I doubt not there hath been found much mifcarriage one way and another, in those that are or have been engaged in it. This indeed is the lefs to be wondered at, because of the undue motives upon which matrimony is usually undertaken. If there be no eye to the glory of God in the choice of the person; or if that aim be but a secondary one, taken in by the way, whilst interest or inclination are allowed to have the first place; if the approaches towards this state be not fanctified by prayer, the good husband and wife fought out from the Lord; if the duties of the married state, and its difficulties be not confidered before-hand, and the heart prepared for them by grace; if there has not been also a prudential regard to tempers and circumstances: if all these needful fteps have been neglected, and people rush into matrimony unadvifedly, lightly and wantonly, to fatisfy 'their carnal Iusts and appetites, like brute beafts that have no understanding; I befeech you, can it be any wonder that they ill perform the duties of the matrimonial relation, and that fuch state proves uncomfortable to them, and full of disappointment in respect of what they hoped for in it? Wherefore, as ever we would expect God's bleffing on that state, we must enter upon it in areligious and godly manner: grace must direct us principally in our choice, nor must we corrupt the minds

minds of those we purpose to marry, by fulsome flattery, and vain expectations. 'A prudent wife,' faith Solomon, 'is from the Lord,'\* and at his hands she must be obtained.

Put the whole now together, and fee if you are not guilty respecting the matrimonial duties now laid before you. And if you are, as who in this relation is not? you will easily fee how the number of your fins increases upon you. 'Who can tell his iniquities?" you may well fay. It will be well, if your desires after Christ, and value for his falvation, increase with the discovery made of your fins; else my labour, and your attention shall be in vain. You do not attain the end of the law mentioned in the text, and are not schooled home to Christ. But if the law have already wrought this effect upon you, and you have taken shelter under the Redeemer's wings, then your conformity to what has this day been fet before you, though it be abundantly imperfect, will graciously prove that you have not believed in vain. In fuch case be thankful, and labour to go on unto perfection, for the glory of God, and your own greater reward.

\* Prov. xix. 14.

# SERMON XXXVIII.

#### GALATIANS iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our school naster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

S the law of God can be the only rule of our conduct, fo departure from it must needs bring us under his difpleasure; and the sense of the one and the other ought to engage us feriously and penitently to feek for mercy in the way God offers it to us. This is the use we are bid by the text to make of the law; and I suppose that a more distinct explanation, in its feveral commands and prohibitions, might ferve by the bleffing of God, to this defirable end. In these views I have already submitted to your inquiry an explanation of those parts of the law which relate immediately to God. And in pursuit of the same design, I am now treating of those duties which God requires from us one toward another; which are either relative, arising from particular circumstances in which we are placed, provided for by the fifth commandment; or general, and fuch as we owe to all men, concerning which the will of God is declared in the five last commandments.

It must be observed that all the commandments stand upon the same footing of divine authority, and to break one of them is as much an insult offered to God's government as to break another. Indeed respecting temporal effects there is a difference in the transgression of one commandment and another, according to the differing nature of each commandment.—Thus we variously injure others by breaking the commandments against murder, adultery, thest, and salse witness: but in either of these sins we alike difregard the authority of God. You see therefore it is as great a sin against God to break the

fifth commandment as the fixth or the eighth. Yet it s not fo accounted; we make no great matter of difregarding those relative duties required by the fifth commandment, when we should greatly condemn ourselves were we guilty of theft or adultery; while nevertheless the honour of God, and indeed the welfare of our neighbour, are as much affected by the one as the other.

I have explained already the relations which are domestic, those between parents and children, masters and fervants, husbands and wives. We now step abroad, and consider those which are more general, namely, of ministers and people, magistrates and subjects. Wherefore the

Fourth relation provided for by this fifth Commandment, and which comes now to be spoken to, is that which sub-

fifts between ministers and people.

It will be needful, in order to our better understanding the nature and obligations of this relation, to observe that a ministry is God's appointment for his glory in the edification of the church, by dispensing to it the word and sacraments. This is plain from the commission given by Christ to his disciples, 'Go and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.'\* Here the commission, and the end of it, are both evident; as also the promise of Christ's presence, and power, to attend the ministry. Now therefore, with what temper and conduct must they who are thus folemnly charged and commissioned, minister the gospel? The answer to this will discover the duty of ministers. how must they be received and treated by those to whom they are fent? The answer of this will shew the duty of the people. Concerning both nothing can be plainer, than that it is the business of those, who are thus commissioned, to promote the interests of Christ by all the means in their power; as it is alfo, that they to whom they are fent, ought to receive them in fuch manner, as shall testify their regard for him whose mesfengers they are, and most effectually answer the gracious defign of their office. And therefore I suppose that which is most

most material to be said upon this relation of ministers and people, will fall within the compass of these sour points.

First, Ministers must account themselves servants of Christ, and people must reverence them as bearing that character.

Secondly, Ministers must diligently dispense the word; and

people must meekly receive it at their mouths.

Thirdly, Ministers must give themselves up to their work; and people must communicate unto them in all good things.

Fourthly, Ministers must be an example of what they teach; and people must follow their example as far as they are so.—
To these special duties on the one part and the other, must be added,

Fifthly, as common to both, they must pray for one another. First, Ministers must account themselves servants of Christ; and their people must reverence them as bearing that character. Ministers must account themselves servants of Christ.-To ferve Christ in the gospel is the very end of their office.— Christ did not appoint them that they should serve their own lusts by their calling; but simply that they should serve the interests of his kingdom, in raising up and edifying his church. This is the very defign of their institution; and in this view they are variously called, 'Ambassadors for Christ; \* stewards of the mysteries of God; + labourers in the Lord's harvest; ‡ Watchmen over the house of Israel, " as well as by other titles, which fufficiently declare the nature, importance, and divine appointment of their office. They must therefore account themselves men set apart to the service of Christ in the This must be their great aim, and this they must regard as their great business, otherwise they pervert their inftitution, will infallibly betray their master's interest, and suffer the wolf to scatter and devour his sheep. They must be fensible of the prodigious trust committed to them; how the honour of God, and the falvation or destruction of immortal fouls, are most intimately connected with their faithfulness or negligence. Their great inquiries should be, ' Have I the temper of an ambaffador for Christ, my heart abounding with seal for the honour and interests of his kingdom, and big

<sup>\* 2</sup> Cor. v. 20.

<sup>‡</sup> Matt. ix. 20.

with the most affectionate longing, after the souls committed to my care, to bring them home to Christ, and to feed them and nourish them in his pastures! Am I ready to sacrifice my all for his and their interests? Have I no by-ends; neither feeking in the pride of my heart, to lord it over God's heritage, nor in the covetousness of my heart, to promote my own filthy lucre? Is God my witness; and will the judgment-day make it publicly appear to the affembled world, that I am not led by worldly views in my office; and that I mean this one thing, (dearer to me than my life, and which is the principle of my whole conduct) the interests of Jesus and the falvation of fouls? And was this always my aim and view? Did it engage me to enter into the office; and has it fteadily followed me in it from that day until now? At that time had I no undue eye to the honours or interests of the world? And fince that time have I never been warped to a conformity with the world, by a defire of obtaining its wealth, or of preferving its esteem and favour?' These are great inquiries, which enter into the very foul of the ministerial office. Happy should I be, could I answer them as St Paul did, 'I know nothing by myself.'\* Such is the account ministers must make of themselves. And what account must their people make of them? They must account of them as 'the miinifters of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God;+' in which character they must bear a reverence towards them upon their heart. Hear what the scripture faith feech you, brethren, to know them who labour among you, and are over you in the Lord: and efteem them very highly in love for their work's fake.' You fee, the minister must be esteemed in love for the sake of his office : for it is that and not his abilities, which puts honour upon him. must be esteemed for his work's sake; because he is the servant of Christ to minister the gospel. If he be honoured because of his learning, yea, even because of his goodness, these (though otherwise proper grounds of reverence) are not the mark: he must be reverenced because he is Christ's servant.-Let the elders who rule well, be counted worthy of double 6 honour, especially they who labour in the word and docf trine.

\* 1 Cor iv. 4.

<sup>† 1</sup> Cor. iy. 1.

trine.'\* Speaking of Epaphroditus, the apostle says to the Philippians, ' Receive him in the Lord with all gladness, and hold fuch in reputation: because for the word's fake he was inigh unto death.'t A messenger of Christ, is one in an honourable station, and must be received with a degree of reverence proportionable to the dignity and majesty of him whose servant he is. Accordingly Christ saith, 'He that depiseth you, despiseth me. + So it must needs be; because to despise the messenger, proves a difregard of him that sent him. You fee therefore that reverence is due to the ministers of Chrift, that they must be considered in that character, and for that reason must be esteemed. I say, they must be reverenced for their work's fake, because they represent Christ's person, (what a gravity and dignity should that impress upon their own hearts and conduct!) because they bring his message, and minister his ordinances. It is herein lies the ground of the reverence due to them; not the man, however qualified, but the fervant of Christ must be respected; the master must be honoured in the fervant. 'I magnify mine office,' faith St Paul. His office, you observe, not himself. Aaron and Mofes ask, 'What are we, that ye murmur against us?' We are nothing: but in confideration of the office God hath invested them with, they add, 'Your murmurings are not against us, but against the Lord.' In this view what have ministers to boast? Yet how evidently must they be reverenced for their work's fake? Suffer me therefore to ask, have you accounted ministers as servants and representatives of Chrift? As fuch have you esteemed and honoured them, neither despising them for the meanness of their gifts, nor if they have been of more diftinguished talents, paying respect to their abilities instead of their office? Have you at all times behaved respectfully towards them, bearing with their infirmities, (for they are men and not angels) and concealing as far as you might their frailties? Especially have you never behaved irreverently towards them in the execution of their public truft, flighting, despising, railing at, or jesting upon their mesfages brought you from God? Have you, like David, patiently heard their reproofs, faying with him, 'I have finned,' when

\* 1 Tim. v. 17 † Philip. ii. 29, 30. ‡ Luke x. 16. || Rom. vi. 13. § Exod. 16, 7, 8.

it has been faid to your heart, 'Thou art the man;'\* or in the spirit of the ill tutored children of Bethel to Elisha have you said, 'Go up thou bald head?' As far as any have failed in reverence toward their ministers, they will be found not only to have sinned against God, but also against their own souls; for to profit by a ministry there must needs be a reverent regard to the institution of Christ in the appointment of it; otherwise if that be wanting, and the ordinance of God disregarded, there is nothing of that spirit of meekness wherein only we can receive into our hearts the word that is able to save our souls. But this enters into the

Second duty of ministers and people. Ministers must diligently dispense the word; and the people must meekly receive it. - Ministers must dispense the word. This is the means of executing their office; they are appointed purposely to deliver, explain and apply God's meffages of reproof, direction. and comfort, which are written in the fcripture. And this it is their office and duty to do, as need is, with all freedom, diligence, and simplicity. It is their business to search, understand and explain the way of falvation contained in the scriptures, fo that their people may, if they will, be instructed in the whole counfel of God towards them, fet forth, not from man's inventions, nor upon man's authority, but from the plain word of God according to the express injunction, Teaching them all things whatfoever I have commanded vou.' You find, they must teach what Christ has commanded, and nothing elfe: and all this they must teach, with-holding nothing profitable to falvation. Herein they must be painful and unwearied, never tired of their work, but spending and improving their time in fuch a manner as to be themselves better instructed, and to be prepared with such discourses as may best tend to the edification of their people. It is their business on the one hand to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, to make known to those who are seeking God, the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the confolations of the Spirit, to the end that the bruised may be healed, the broken hearted bound up, the fervants of Jesus established by the feafonable ministration of the promises and facraments.— On the other hand it is their business boldly to rebuke vice, to

fland up against iniquity, to watch the sins that abound, to oppose to them the threatenings of God's word: and herein to fet their faces as brafs, neither to be ashamed nor afraid to tell the house of Facob their sins; as becomes those who are fet on purpose to confound the kingdom of satan, and to exalt the kingdom of their master Christ. In a word, they must diligently, perseveringly, and immoveably minister the gospel for the honour of God and the falvation of men; neither of which can any other way be forwarded or maintained but by the gospel. All this may seem an easy task to those who are not engaged in it: but how much pains will it cost to underftand all these things! how much denial of flesh and blood to go through the private and public labours that will be found in a faithful execution of this work! and above all, what firmness and difinterestedness is needful in honestly opposing the gospel to the authority, maxims, and practices of a wicked world! but whether ministers have thus dispensed the word or not, this is their duty and the very end of their office; and as St Paul faith, 'Wo will be unto them, if they preach not the gospel.'\*- The people must meekly receive the word, which it is the duty and office of ministers thus to dispense to them. If it is the duty of ministers to teach, it must be the duty of people to learn; if their business is to instruct in the ways of God, then it is the people's to walk in them. 'Obey them that have rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your fouls as they that must give an account; that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you.'t The main thing in this obedience and submission is to obey the doctrine the minister preaches out of God's word; which as the passage intimates, will be as delightful to the minister, as it is and will be profitable to the people. But when the people run quite contrary, hear indeed, and are, it may be, very kind to the minister, yet have no care to practife what he teaches them, they do not their duty to him, they difregard his office, they bring him to daily grief, they discourage and weaken his hands, and cause him to pour out fad complaints before God on their behalf. Nothing is plainer than the duty of the people in this case; they must attend the ministration of the word at the mouth of the mi-

at

minister; they must wait with humble, meek and teachable hearts, upon this divine institution; they must hear it as the word of God; they must lay it up in their hearts; and shew forth their profiting by their practice. And in proportion as this is done the defign of a ministry is answered, God is glorified, and the church is edified. Now therefore, if any would know whether they have done their duty to their ministers. they must look into their hearts and lives, and see if they can find transcribed in them their humility, faith, holiness and heavenly-mindedness, the lessons they have heard from God's minister. As far as they come short, they will of necessity condemn themselves. And then they must make enquiry whence it has been that fo much feed fown upon them hath brought forth fo little fruit, it may be none at all: whether they have not heard lightly, irreverently, contentiously, curiously; whether they have not attended to the man rather than the minister, saying with the people in Ezekiel's days, ' Come let us fee how the prophet will succeed to day;' whether they have not fuffered the devil to catch away the feed fown in their hearts, by going away, and quickly forgetting all in company or vanity. All must inquire, why after so many reproofs delivered, their corruptions are fo ftrong; after fo many promifes declared, their faith and other graces are fo weak; after fo much teaching, they are fo ignorant and unenlightened: in short, why they have done so little of their duty to their minister, in that point wherein, if he be a true one, he eminently defires to fee them fubmit to him.

Here is a grand inquiry on the one part and the other; and fuch as if honeftly made will leave both condemned; and both you and we shall be crying out, 'Lord, have mercy upon us.' I am sure it behoves us ministers to make diligent fearch, seeing we have so dreadful a denunciation levelled against us, if we forbear to speak the truth through sloth, cowardice or desire of pleasing men. 'Son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore thou shalt hear the word from my mouth, and warn them from me. When I fay unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hands.'\* Surely after this none can be angry

at us that we fpeak freely. And for you, my brethren, doth it not behove you to inquire how you have heard the word at our mouths? That is an awful fentence of our Lord's, and implies much more than it fpeaks, 'Whofoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust from under your feet for a testimony against them.'\*
To which I might add many more equally alarming, and enough to stir you up to deep humiliation, for your neglect or abuse of God's ordinance, by which we are appointed mini-

sters of his word to you.

. Thirdly, It is the duty of Ministers to give themselves up to their work; and the people must communicate unto them in all good things. Ministers must give themselves up to their work. Their ministerial office is their proper calling; nor should they have any other but upon necessity or charity, as was the case of St Paul. Indeed they will find employment enough for their time, without going out of the way of their duty, if they have their heart in their work. 'Give attendance, faith St Paul to Timothy, to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine; neglect not the gift that is in thee.' 'Meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all.' It is a strange mistake you fee that ministers have little or nothing to do. Surely if they mind their business, they will find no leisure for vain pleafures, and will fpend as little time and thought as they can upon the cares of the world. And this ministers among us have obliged themselves to by an ordination promife; they will lay aside the study of the world and the flesh, and give themselves up to such employments as are proper to their calling. They are to separate themselves as much as may be from worldly engagements, their province being to fludy and promote the interests of Jesus and the happiness of their people in a better life. You should see them therefore minding this one thing, unremitting in their labours, and evidently manifesting the importance of their office by their diligence in it, and attention to it. 'Give thyfelf wholly to them;' to thy labours, thy studies, thy master, thy people. This is the employment of the minister .- And if it be, then the duty of the people must be on the other hand to communicate to their No. 5. AA

<sup>\*</sup> Mark vi. 11.

ministers in all good things. 'If we have sown unto you 'spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things !'\* It is the people's duty freely and without grudging to help their minister with sufficient allowance of the things of this life, that he may be at leisure without distraction to attend upon the duties of his calling. Were I speaking to another congregation, I should have occasion to press this point, seeing there are many, 'who,' as one faith, 'are wont to think all well-gotten which they can defraud and deceive the minister of.' But as it is, I do but hint this duty of the minister's maintenance as that which the people ought gladly and chearfully to afford: and pass to the

Fourth duty of ministers and people, namely, ministers must be examples of what they teach, and people must follow their example as far as they are fo.—Ministers must set a good example. There is a very remarkable direction to this purpose given to Timothy. 'Let no man despise thy youth.'-But Timothy might be apt to fay, ' How can I hinder them?' Why this way, faith St Paul,' Be thou an example of the beelievers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity;'+ do this, and though thou be young, they will not despise thee. An example in the minister is a main point; and there is none the scripture infifts more upon, as you may fee especially in the epistles of St Paul, particularly in those to Timothy and Titus. I will mention but one, In all things 'shew thyself a pattern of good works, in doctrine, uncorrupte ness, gravity sincerity.'t Titus, and every other minister must be a pattern of christian godliness; must live what he preaches, must go before his slock in every point of duty. His example must correct vice, must countenance all manner of godliness, in a word, must recommend the Gospel. He must be the foremost in breaking through sinful customs; he must lead the way in every point of felf-denying and difficult duty. He must not ' lay burdens on others, which he will not touch himself with one of his fingers.'|| He must not give encouragement to fin by the least appearance of compliance; his conduct must be a continual exemplification of the doctrines he teaches. Little can be expected by us, to speak the truth, we

<sup>\*</sup> Gal. vi. 6. 1 Cor. ix. 11. † Titus ii. 7.

<sup>† 1</sup> Tim. iv. 12. || Luke xi. 46.

can expect nothing, among our people, when our conduct does not go hand in hand with our doctrine. The people, too ready to take advantage of every encouragement to fin, will fet our examples against what we teach them, and plead prescription for their iniquities from ours. Through the corruption of nature the bias is strong to the side of vice; from whence it happens, that tho' the best examples produce little of the good effect upon others which might be hoped for from them, examples that are not of the best will go great lengths in hardening others in fin. Wherefore fince fin has fo powerful an advocate in the heart, the fervants of Christ must not add any thing to its influence by their conduct, but reprove it by their example, and give all the weight in their power to the cause of Christ, by joining an unbiameable edifying practice to a true christian preaching. The man of God must be every way fuch; every where and in every thing must live for Christ; so letting his light shine before men that they may see his good works, and glorify God by submitting to Christ. On the other hand, it must be the duty of the people to follow the good examples of their ministers, to follow them as they follow Christ. It is a foolish conceit in the mouths of many, that fuch and fuch things are not right in ministers. Why then, they are not right in others neither. For what, is there one rule in scripture for the minister's duty and conduct, and another for the people's? Or can the minister do or forbear a jot more than the law of God requires of all? The whole possibledifference lies here, that the minister, as the fervant of Christ, is peculiarly obliged to go before others in doing and forbearing. But suppose he should not! if he does not forbear what he should forbear, will this excuse the people for committing fin? Or if he does not do what he should, will God therefore excuse the people for neglecting their duty? This is a fenseless conceit, and exactly calculated to render ministerial example on the fide of godliness of no effect. What is the miniter's good example to the people, if it be conceived as fomething peculiar, which they are not to follow? See the device of fatan! when the minister doth any thing amis, then the cry is, Well may we if the minister does so: but when the minister acts in an exemplary manner, then the tone is altered to Such things are very well in a clergyman.' But remember it is the duty of the people to be influenced by, and to follow A A 2 upivers

universally the good example of the minister in holy converfation, and in opposing the world to follow him; to observe his conduct, not to encourage themselves in wickedness, but to be directed and encouraged in godliness; not presently to judge him precise in abstaining from common customs, but to sufpect there may be somewhat amiss in them, seeing he avoids them; nor to imagine he is righteous beyond measure in doing more than others, but modestly suppose that being the teacher of others he is better acquainted with his and their duty.— But,

Fifthly and laftly, It is the common duty of ministers and people to pray for each other. Well it becometh ministers (who are the fervants of Christ, and have so difficult a task on their hand in his behalf with the untoward hearts of men, as well as to oppose the whole power of spiritual wickedness) to pray earnestly and frequently for God's bleffing and grace to fall continually on their ministrations; that they may be fuccessful upon the people, that God will forgive their fins, will not be provoked to take his Spirit from them; that the Lord himself will take them in hand, heal their sinful nature, and cause his word to work effectually on their hearts. We find St Paul continually speaking of his bowing his knees before God, with ceaseless importunity for the establishment and growth of believers. And Samuel Jays, God forbid that I 6 should fin against the Lord, by ceasing to pray for you."-Indeed it would be a foolish and vain thing, should a minister think of doing any good among his people without praying for them. Should he preach with all the zeal of Paul and all the eloquence of Apollos, all would be fruitless unless God gave the increase. It is not man's labour and wisdom, but the Spirit that can make the word effectual to humble the lofty looks of the proud, and to strengthen the feeble hands of the faint. And therefore it is the duty of ministers to pray much for their people, and to give God the praise if any fruit hath been wrought by their ministry. When Jeremiah could not prevail with the people he was fent to, he fays, like a true Prophet, 'My foul shall weep in fecret places for your pride.'t If public preaching cannot prevail, I will try what private mourning will do; if I cannot move you to repent, I will try if I cannot move God to convert you. By fuch exercises the minister will also find the enlargement of his heart much increased toward his people, and his soul stirred up to much fatherly love and compassion, which will mightily help him in his labours toward them. - We hear often on the other fide of the peoples praying for their ministers. Pray for us, saith the apostle to the Hebrews. To the Thessalonians he says, ' Pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men.'\* This is a great duty lying on the people. And yet it is to be feared there are many who never once offered up one true and hearty prayer for their minister, that he might be furnished with abilities for fo great and weighty an office; that he might have the gift of wisdom and utterance to divide the word aright; that the Lord would be with his mouth to speak to the consciences of his hearers, and to their edifying; many again that never thanked God for stirring up their minister's heart at any time to reprove fin with more earnestness, and to call to repentance with more power; as if it were no mercy to them that God opened their minister's heart thus to be plain and pressing with them. You must judge for yourselves, whether herein doth not lie a confiderable cause of so much fruitless hearing among

The inftitution of a ministry being God's, the duties which I have now laid before you on one part and the other arising out of that institution, must be matters of much importance. And it will become us on both sides to consider how we have discharged them. Not in such a manner I am consident either you or we, that both have not great need of God's forgiveness. And blessed be God, he sits on a throne of mercy prepared by the blood of the Redeemer. Thither then let us come with contrite and penitent hearts, and our sins shall not be our destruction. And while we are pleading the riches of redeeming love for our pardon, we shall sind our hearts animated with vigour to run in the ways of God's commandments. Happy they who have so tasted that our God is gracious, as that their hearts are thereby sincerely inclined to keep his laws.

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SER

## SERMON XXXIX.

### GALATIANS iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unter Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

THE plain defign of the fifth commandment, which for feveral Sundays has afforded matter of consideration, is to regulate by God's immediate authority the divers relations men fland in one to another. And this he does, not fo much to preferve the peace and good order of fociety, (though it is manifest that where there is no regard to God's command in the feveral focial relations, there fociety has no stable foundation) as by the influence of these several relations religiously observed, to promote his own glory in the maintenance of piety among finful and corrupted creatures. By a distinct confideration of the relative duties, it manifestly appears how peculiarly God's honour and our prefent happiness would be promoted, did we all faithfully discharge the social trust he has committed to us: while it may be equally easy to observe that the great difference which religion fuffers, and much of that vexation and mifery that is in the world, can be afcribed to no other cause than our difregard of our duty in these relations. Were parents and children, masters and servants, husbands and wives, ministers and people, magistrates and subjects, all kinds of superiors and inferiors, what they should be in these feveral relations, what a refemblance of heaven would there be upon earth! how would peace and happiness abound; how would religion flourish; how would God be glorified! especially would all this appear and be produced from the confcientious regard that should be paid to the duties of magistrates and subjects; which being a relation of a more large extent, and taking in all persons, the good effects of faithfulness in it

on the one part and the other would be more universal? as on the contrary difregard to the duties of fuch relation on one or both fides must be more dreadfully destructive to God's honour in the world and man's focial happiness. Whether this nation of ours be not an instance in proof of what I am advancing, I will leave any man to judge. With all the means of public happiness in our hands which any nation this day in the world can boast of, what are we? Are not our counsels distracted, our measures and undertakings unsuccessful?\* Is there not fomewhat at the bottom, which, like the worm that smote Jonah's gourd, withers all our hopes, and lays us open to the stroke of affliction, as the prophet's fainting head was exposed to the raging heat of the fun when that friendly shelter was taken away? And what is this, but want of conscience toward God in those who are intrusted with authority, and in those who are in subjection? Is there any shew of conscience toward God in those who are in authority, I mean those who are in public trust? Does not every man mean himself, not God's glory, (alas, how little is that thought of !) not the public good? And if you cast your eye to the side of the people, can you fee any thing like obedience to governors for conscience fake? Is not every man fet up for a judge of his governors, blaming all things, directing all things, determining all things in his own conceit; our liberty turned into a factious licentiousness? There is little conscience toward God on either part; and from hence we are naturally, necessarily, and judicially finking under confusions at home, and disappointments abroad. What can put a stop to bur certain ruin? Nothing on our part but the fear of God falling on our hearts. We may call for a change of men and measures; our expectations may run high from this and that enterprise; but we shall sooner or later in the issue but ' reap the whirlwind' as the prophet speaks, unless the fear of God possess our hearts, and regard to his honour and law influence us to a faithful discharge of our duty as governors and people. Let us open therefore our hearts to conviction, while I am laying out the duties of magistrates and fubjects, which is the

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<sup>\*</sup> This Sermon was preached at Truro, May 22, 1757, when our affairs had a very cloudy aspect; but it pleased God afterwards to favour our counsels, and give great success to the British arms against their enemies.

Fifth relation provided for by the commandment now under consideration. In order to the clearer understanding the scope and extent of this relation, let it be remembered, that government is 'an ordinance of God,' not as to the particular form of it, but with regard to the obligations which rulers and fubjects are mutually brought into by being members of fociety. Here God's authority comes in, and obliges to the respective duties of this relation. And then be it farther confidered, what is God's defign in this ordinance. This the apostle plainly intimates in that direction to 'Timothy, I exhort that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.'t In the latter clause of this passage you may observe, how the end of government is marked out to be, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life; and then the means hereto are added, in all godliness and honesty.' There can be no quiet and peace without godliness and honesty; and therefore the design of government is, by maintaining godliness and honesty, to preferve quietness and peace among a people.

Now godliness and honesty are to be maintained, and so peace and quietness promoted, only by the faithful discharge of the duties of that station we are called to in government, whether it be a station of authority or of subjection. There must be rulers for the maintenance of godliness and honesty: these must look to their work; and they must also be submitted to and supported in their carrying it on: otherwise if rulers be negligent or people will not submit, the design of government is overturned; and as godliness and honesty are not maintained by it, so neither are quietness and peace procured. From the whole thus stated, it will be easy to see what are the duties of magistrates and subjects. If government be God's ordinance for the quietness and peace of society by means of

godliness and honesty maintained hereby; then,

First, Those in authority must regard themselves as God's ministers appointed for these ends.—And subjects must rever-

ence them as the ministers of God.

Secondly, Magistrates must use their authority to the maintenance of godliness, honesty and peace.—And subjects must obey them in their lawful commands and administrations.

Thirdly, Magistrates must look to and provide for the public necessities, according to the nature of their offices.—And subjects must chearfully contribute to bear them out in doing for

Fourthly, They muft mutually pray for God's bleffing to make the whole effectual.

First, Magistrates must regard themselves as God's ministers, appointed for the maintenance of godliness, honesty, peace, and quietness.—And subjects must reverence them as

bearing God's authority towards them.

Magistrates must regard themselves as God's ministers. By • me, fays the fovereign judge, kings reign, and princes decree justice; by me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.'\* Magistrates you find are God's deputies. There is no power but of God, faith St Paul; the powers that be are ordained of God 't You may fee what magistrates ought to be, in the direction given by the same apostle, a little lower in the same chapter; when insisting on the duties of fubmission, and paying tribute, he calls magistrates again and again, ministers of God; 'He is the minister of God for good. He is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil. They are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.'-Wherefore as God's ministers they must regard themselves: not fet up to ferve themselves but God's glory in the good of the people he hath committed to them. Magistrates are not fet up over others by God's ordinance, to swell up their hearts with pride and ambition, to indulge themselves in their own naturally wayward will, to fill their purfes, or to encourage them in floth, luxury and extravagance; no, but to be ministers of God for the peoples good, in ruling according to the wholefome laws of the conftitution, to be nursing fathers and nursing mothers to them. Yet authority is a great temptation to a corrupted heart; and it will behove all who have been or are in authority and trust, in places of lower as well as of the highest consideration, to make diligent inquiry whether they have humbly regarded themselves as the ministers of God; whether they have had in view to ferve his glory in their places; whether they have executed their trust with a pure defign

<sup>\*</sup> Prov. viii. 15, 16. # Rom. xiii. 1.

fign of rendering their office effectually useful to the people under them; whether they have had no indirect aims to their own worldly honour; whether they have not exercised their authority to the indulgence of their own self-will; whether they have not had a finful respect to their prosit; in short, whether they have purely designed to glorify God in their office, and whether there has not been something or other in their conduct that would argue a want of such purity and simplicity of intention, and manifest an ambitious, proud, wilful, selfish aim.

It is worth while to confider the direction given to Mofes respecting the choice of Magistrates. This will shew what fort of persons they ought to be. It may be found in the eighteenth chapter of Exodus at the twenty-first verse; 'Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness, and place such over • them.' Magistrates must be able men, such as have skill and ability for their employment; they must be such as fear God, who believe his eye is over them, and that they shall be accountable to him for their conduct: men who make a conscience of their office, and will neither neglect nor betray it.-They must be men of truth, to be depended upon for their integrity, who will not be double-hearted or act a bad part upon any confideration; and hating covetousness, persons not to be biassed by any regards of interest, and who are above seeking themselves in the execution of their trust. That is, in a word, they must be men who will be at pains to understand their duty, and mean only the glory of God and the good of the public in the discharge of it.

On the other part, subjects must reverence magistrates as bearing God's authority. It is not enough to obey the lawful commands of magistrates; this is nothing in the fight of God, if it do not iffue from a reverence of their authority in the heart. The word is, Honour the king.\* It lies in the temper of the heart; the magistrate must be honoured because God has honoured him; God's authority must be seen resting upon him, and for the sake of that, his person, as God's minister, must be reverenced. Many a person will have some fear of the magistrate for wrath's sake, because he has the power of punish-

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ing; many are struck with the pomp and solemnity of his appearance; many are influenced to a kind of awe by the dignity of his station: but none of this is honouring the magistrate as the minister of God. We then only properly honour the magistrate, when we honour God in his person. That was true reverence in David, when he faid concerning Saul, 'I will not oput forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the Lord's anointed.'t Saul was the Lord's anointed; that was the foundation of David's reverence. What then shall we say of those in our days who have no reverence of magistrates?-What account do they make of God's ordinance? or how will they answer it to him at his judgment? Yet there is a visible irreverence every where towards those in authority. A licentious spirit is gone out, which does not fear God, and so does onot honour the king, and those who bear office under him.'t It is a finful irreverence to speak evil of the rulers of the people.' Then what place, what house, what tongue is exempt? How difrespectfully have you often heard persons in the highest as well as the lowest offices spoken of! what rash interpretations put upon all their public conduct! how have they been treated as if there were no difference between them and us! what, because we are a free people, may we therefore set afide God's commandment, and forget that we owe reverence to those who represent God in the state, and are eminently diftinguithed by the mark of his authority? But it will be faid, If they behaved in their offices as they ought, they would be respected by us. This makes no difference in the matter: the reverence is due to the man because of his office, not to the office because of the man. Let the man be what he will, the office is still the same; and as long as he bears it, he must be reverenced because set in authority. The truth is, there is no reverence amongst us paid to magistrates because of their office: if they behave well indeed they shall ger some respect; but then, to what is that respect paid, to the office or to the man? If to the man, what has religion and the command of God to do in the case? To be plain, all honouring of magillrates for the Lord's fake feems in a manner out of doors; fearce any one thinks of them as ministers of God: hence they have lost their authority, their hands are weakened, they have no hold upon

upon our consciences, and there remains chiefly the form with-

out the power of governors.

If there be any one national vice in this kingdom, any one that overtops all the rest, it is want of reverence for authority. How familiarly are we come to think and fpeak of our governors! how free are we to censure all their proceedings! how ready, as has appeared lately all over the land, to take the redress of our calamities out of our governor's hands, and to do ourselves right, as we think it! To go no farther than this very place for an exemplification of the spirit that prevails.-What religious reverence has been paid to our magistracy? There is indeed some fear of their power, some respect to their fortune; but where is the reverence due to them as ministers of God, while one and another is at every turn speaking fo irreverently of them, and not feldom even to them! It is in no degree better, I am very confident, elsewhere. It cannot be otherwise; as Christian piety has decayed, a licentious undutiful spirit hath taken place in our hearts; and as we have forgotten to fear God, we have learnt to difregard man. So it is in fact, all regard to authority is generally departed; whoever will, may fee it; methinks we can hardly help feeing it whether we will or no. Yet the consequences are above all things to be dreaded. With your leave I will mention two of them.

The first is, when a nation has cast off regard to governors, it has actually rejected God's ordinance, which government was above shewn to be. Governors being God's ministers in the state, to cast off regard to their authority, is to fly directly in God's face as to the point of government, and to reject that very method which he hath established for national peace and prosperity. Now as far as this is our case, it is plain he must be provoked at us as a people. When the Israelites would have a king, they did not mean to cast off all regard to authority, yet it was a flight put upon God's majesty, and therefore he gave them a king in his anger. But when a people will own no authority, but flatly oppose the ordinance of God, this is an higher infult offered to him, an avowed rejection of his inflitution; nor can they reasonably expect but that his hand shall be against them to punish and confume them till they be no more a people. And,

Secondly, When a nation has lost regard to authority, the

only cement of fociety is gone, and they must fall in pieces of course, be eaten up by domestic confusions, or be made an easy prey to an enemy from abroad. Can any fociety fubfift without somewhat to tie it together? But when regard to authority is gone, there is no longer any tie sublishing, by which the people are bound to their governors The outward form of the constitution may remain for a season, but the life of it is no more. There is an actual spirit of rebellion in that people, they will do as they lift, nothing but force can restrain them. If force do restrain them, they are slaves: if it do not, they will fooner or later be devoured one of another.

Upon these considerations, the truth of which are but too fadly made out to us in part by the hand of God on the fide of our enemies against us, as well as by the uncommon confusions among those who are at the head of our affairs, is there not just cause to conclude we are in greater danger from ourfelves than from all others; and that the fears of those who discern the face of the times with an eye to God's providence, and the natural confequence of national vices, are but too justly grounded? The remedy is indeed at hand, if we had the grace to make use of it. If religion revived, conscience would grow up with it, and then there would be found fuch a religious regard to government as would quickly make this whole people as one man; whose itrength thus com, acted by the supply of all the members would, by the bleffing of God, foon render us capable of maintaining our ground against all that should rife up against us. Wherefore for the fake of our finking country let us return unto the Lord; let us pray him to fend out his Spirit among us; let us contend earnestly for the revival of religion; and let us be patterns, to all men, of that fear of God and honour of his ministers, the want of which must unavoidably iffue in our ruin present and eternal.

Secondly, Magistrates must use their authority for the maintenance of godliness, honesty, quietness and peace. For the maintenance of all these they are God's ministers, and for the fake of supporting them to his glory he has imparted of his authority to them. Within the compass of these lies the whole business of the civil magistrates. They must use their authority to promote godliness or religion, by preserving the free and public exercise of it unmoletted, and by punishing wickedness and vice in a due execution of the laws against it. They

must use their authority to maintain bonesty; not only must they punish those who are dishonest, but also they must labour to remove all the occasions of it, such as places of idle resort. houses of gaming and lewdness, which are among the plentiful causes of knavery, theft, and other such kinds of villainy. They must use their authority for keeping peace and quietness among the people; good order, and reforessing the turbulent spirits of violent and troublesome persons, lie within the reach of the magistrate's sword, and he must not fail to use it, as need requires. These are the general duties of his office, which I do but hint at, because it is my business rather to infift on the diligence, boldness, and impartiality wherewith the magistrate ought to execute his office. He must be diligent, look well to his trust, have his eyes everywhere about him, not fuffer the fword to lie afleep in the scabbard, but have it always in his hand for the punishing of evil doers. As also he must be careful to give a due measure of praise to them that do well. An indolent magistrate is a very bad one, unfaithful to God and to the trust committed to his care, and while he sleeps, the guilt of a thousand fins and miseries light upon his head. If he fleeps, he bears the fword in vain. To diligence he must add boldness, he must know no man, and fear no man, in the execution of his office; he must not be moved from his duty by apprehensions of any future consequence that may attend his doing right; he must not be deterred by threatenings, nor melted down by a falle pity, nor wearied out by complaints, intreaties, or the intercession of friends. He must go on to do his duty, though the world be against him, and in defiance to all the pleadings against it he will find in himself. He must regard no opposition, but go out fword in hand against a multitude of evil doers. He must not decline any thing which the honour of God and the welfare of the people require at his hand. He must have the courage to be singular as need is in executing his truft, and must not be biassed by what shall be faid or thought of him. In short he must be in the state, what Elijah was in the church, very jealous for the Lord God.\* For the judgment is God's.+ Nor must he stop here. He must be also impartial, he must know neither hatred nor affection; interest must not be allowed to throw a grain into either scale;

he must deal alike by all, the rich as well as the poor. The law must be his rule, and he must make no difference between those who come under the stroke of it: here he must be blind. In this manner the magistrate must use his authority in the maintenance of godlines, honesty and peace. To maintain these must be his aim in the whole exercise of his office; and such is the diligence, boldness, and impartiality, with which he must behave himself in so important a trust. You see if the honour of a magistrate be great, his labour is not less.—Well may every magistrate cry out, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' Lord have mercy upon me! and very reasonably may he expect the concurrence of the subject to relieve him as much as may be from so heavy a burden. This he has

a right to.

For on the other hand, God has laid it on subjects to obey magistrates in all their lawful commands and administrations. And were this done, the duty of the magistrate would be more easy and pleasant. Now nothing can be more express than the injunctions of scripture on this head. 'Submit vourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's fake, whether it be to the king as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are fent by him.'\* 'Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates.'t Let every • foul be subject to the higher powers.' The point to be confidered is, wherein doth this obedience and subjection confift? It consists in a conformity with the laws of the land (supposing them not contrary to the laws of God) and in a submission to the magistrate in the execution of them. To obey the magistrate, doth principally imply obedience to the laws of the state; from which whoever doth wilfully depart in any instance is disobedient to that government under which he is, and fins against God. Yet to obey magistrates doth also imply farther, that it is the subject's duty not to resist, but to submit to the magiftrate in the execution of fuch laws: for laws are nothing, unless life be given to them by the vigilance and activity of the magistrate. So that the subject's obedience reaches to all the laws, and to the lawful execution of them He may not transgrefs the laws, neither may he any way ftop the course of their fanctions, to render them ineffectual. Now I say were there

this confcientious obedience in subjects, the execution of government would be a more easy matter to those in authority; indeed they would have little else to do but to go through the forms and ceremonies of their office. But as it is, difobedience in fubjects is fure to provide them work enough for the exercise of their courage and zeal. There are so many sins against God, that are injurious to the state, and therefore punishable by the laws of it, fuch as drunkenness, sabbath. breaking, lewdness, swearing; there are so many fins directly against the state itself, such as frauds in public trust, in payments of customs and duty, gaming, unlawful houses, cheating, oppression, theft, corruption in elections, and numberless others, by which the peace and welfare of fociety is fo directly ftruck at, that the magistrate shall not want employment. Indeed there is more than he can possibly effect, and evil workers will often escape his watchfulness and diligence: but then they cannot escape the judgement of God, who knows all, and will furely punish all in the day of account. Seek therefore after whatever you have done in disobedience to government, and repent of it betimes, calling upon God for mercy for Jesus Christ's fake, else you shall find at last that those who have resisted shall receive to themselves damnation.\*

Thirdly, Magistrates must look to, and provide for the public necessities, according to the nature of their office. - And subjects must chearfully contribute to bear them out in so doing.

It is the part of governors to look after the public exigencies of every kind, to provide all manner of fervants for the state, to prepare every thing which the public need requires, to keep the kingdom ingood order at home by the wholesome and seasonable execution of laws, to maintain it against all its enemies abroad, and when necessity is, to carry on war: in short the management of public affairs lies on governors. They are not fet up for their own ends, to fill their pockets, to gratify their ambitious hearts, to aggrandize their families, and vainly to feek for themselves a name and honour in their generation. God has no fuch defign in advancing one above another. They are fervants of the state; their office is designed for the public good; they are appointed by God to attend continually upon this very thing. Let them look to themselves therefore that are looking

looking after places of public truft, with what views they are feeking them. It should be merely to serve God and the people; that offices of trust should be undertaken; with fear and trembling, because of the weight and importance of them. But is this the only aim? Is all the strife for places we hear of simply owing to a love of their country? Are men fo zealous now-adays for the public good, that they cannot endure any damage should accrue to it; and therefore are they pressing their shoulders under the heaviest burdens to serve it? Can these things be fo, when the means used to obtain preferments are so indirect, dishonest, illegal and unchristian? When votes are bought for money; when the kingdom presents us with a scene of iniquity at every feafon of election, which makes every thinking man wonder that God does not fink us a thousand fathom into the heart of the earth? Are these things so, when not merit but ability to make interest is the only road to preferment, not only in the ftate, but even the church? I could mention proofs without number, that ambition and covetoufness rule all. Sad proofs, which ought to make us all tremble in the too probable expectation of approaching ruin. But be all this as it may, it is still the express duty of governors confcientiously to have regard to the public, and diligently to care for the public affairs; and for their faithfulness herein they shall answer at a higher judgement.

It is the duty of subjects on their part chearfully to contribute to the public expences. There is no disputing whether this be the will of God. 'Render to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom,'\* are the express dictates of his spirit. And for what is this tribute and custom paid, but for the public maintenance of the state, of which every one receives the benefit? Here another common sin comes under our view; people not only pay their dues to the state grudgingly, in direct opposition to Christ's example; who though he was free from the payment, yet readily made it, lest he should offend them; but by art and contrivance withhold their dues, not paying the customs for that they buy, contrary to law, and making, many of them, a secret trade and livelihood of this ungodly gain. This may be called indeed only cheating the king, as if that were a harmless thing; but

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it is in truth cheating the ftate, that is cheating every honest man in it, that pays his taxes duly. And methinks cheating at any rate is not so commendable a thing for one who is called a christian. But it is easy to see where the cheat will rest at last, even upon the souls of such who, contrary to the laws of God and man, proceed to do what they know in their own consciences to be sinful.

The fourth and last duty of Magistrates and subjects is to pray for one another. 'I exhort that supplications be made for kings and all in authority,'\* is the direction for subjects. And you may fee in all the pious governors in the Old Testament what is the duty of magistrates in this respect. Surely we have need to pray now, if ever: magistrates should pray for the people, and they should pray for the magistrates, that the Lord for Jesus Christ's sake will take pity upon us, and turn our hearts. By prayer we own government to be the ordinance of God, and commend the guidance of it to him. But do we pray on either part? It looks fadly as if we did not; at least not faithfully: for I am fure there are little marks of it to be feen; a praying people being always a godly people, and a people that trusts in God more than in fleets and armies. But God calls us to pray by his judgements. There were no better token in our behalf, than that our hearts were stirred up to do fo. We may think as we will, but unless God help us, all is over with us: all our counfels shall come to nought, all our undertakings fall to the ground. And can we expect he will help us remaining as we are? O for this prayerless people! we have not, we do not call on God in the day of our troublet.'

To conclude: Put all together and fee our provoking fins against God's ordinance; see, each of you, the share yourself has in them as a member of civil society. Lay this to heart, and surely the judgement of God on the land will lay you low. You will cry for mercy for yourself and the people. The law will drive you to Christ. There you will find relief, pardon for the past, and grace to walk in God's laws for the future. Do this, and the peace of God which passethall understanding

shall be with you.

SER-

### SERMON XL.

### GALATIANS iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

In feveral discourses from these words I have been opening the Commandments before you for examination; and am now to conclude what is required in the fifth commandment. The precept of honouring parents is of very extensive latitude, taking in all relative duties; the principal of which have been already spoken to. You have heard the respective duties of parents and children, masters and servants, husbands and wives, ministers and people, magistrates and subjects. I have now only to add that there is a mutual duty arising from various other distributions of distinctions, which God has settled in the world between one man and another. These divide them-selves into three heads.

First, Outward distinctions.

Secondly, Natural gifts and acquifitions.

Thirdly, Spiritual attainments.

First, There are outward diffinctions God has distributed in the world, which, as God's providential appointments, do require observance and reverence in inferiors, and faithfulness, and humility in those who are distinguished by them. Now these outward distinctions arise from a disserence in quality, wealth or age.

First, There is a difference in quality among men. Some are high, othersarelow. So it is in all ftates, the few are diftinguished by birth and rank from the many who are of less consideration. But who has made this difference? • It is the Lord that ma-

keth

keth poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and lifteth up.'\* And if it be God's doing to put others in the world over your head, you must be sure to see God's hand in it, and to own God's allotment herein by reverencing those whom he hath advanced in the world above you. You must on no confideration destroy what God has established; adopt a levelling principle; because you think yourself wifer or better than your superiors, indeed you may be so, and therefore think yourself upon equality with the foremost, and disdain to set your foot behind them: for after all that can be faid they are still your fuperiors, and God has made them fo, and it will be your duty to honour and reverence them as fuch. There are still some outward remains of this reverence preferved in our corner of the land. People of a lower class are generally wont to uncover themselves to those of higher appearance, even though they be strangers. The usage is commendable and decent, and it is a proper acknowledgement of reverence to God in the persons of our superiors, as well as expressive of the different relations we bear one to another under God's government: fo would it be well-if it ferved to put us in mind of that inward honour which every superior in rank has a title to from us by God's appointment. But then on the other hand, has God fet some in station and rank before others? With what defign I pray you? What, for their glory, or his own? Surely he means not that their inferiors should be their slaves; nor has made the distinction to gratify pride. Yet distinction in station is a great temptation to a corrupted heart. What a deal of pride on this confideration may be feen in the world! what a lawlefsness is it apt to give to our hearts in treating with those beneath us! how little apt are we to bear with them, and to be gentle towards them! what liberties are we ready to use with them, their characters and conduct! how forward to be hafty and peevish with them, to rate and foold them! and all through a proud abuse of our superiority over them. I say there is not a man in the world, who has not more or less mistreated his inferiors because they are such; behaving in such manner to them as to have betrayed the pride of his heart, and a want of a due sense of the author of that distribution which alone has fet him in a state of eminence above others. Nabal's temper is that which

is natural to our hearts, and his language is expressive of a deportment we are but too apt to fall into towards our inferiors. Who is David? and who is the fon of Jesse? There be many fervants now a-days that break away every man from his mafter.'\* And then besides this matter mistreating inseriors, whata fwelling and boafting has there always been in the world upon family and extraction, manifested in a secret disdain of such as are of lower birth, and in a haughty carriage towards them! and on the whole how far short have all come of that courtesy of conduct and unfeigned condescension to those of the lowest rank, which would denote a heart duly fensible of the majesty of that God from whom this distinction was received, and for whose glory it was bestowed.—They are very few, indeed but one in this kingdom, that are not inferiors in respect of others above them; and there are not many who have not some under them; fo that this head may afford matter of examination to the most of us on both the part; and concerning both I may venture to lay it down as a certain rule, that as far as we have been stubborn inferiors we have been haughty superiors; as on the other fide whoever bears it with a high hand to those beneath him, can never brook reverently and humbly to ftoop unto those above him.

Secondly, Wealth makes another difference among men, and obliges to honour and reverence. Riches come of God,+ the fcripture affures us: and if they do, God does by them mark out for respect those to whom he gives them. Now God means that we should honour those who he himself honours. Say the worst; fay a rich man uses his riches covetously, luxuriously, felfishly, proudly; yea fay he uses them oppressively, to crush and do wrong to those who are poorer; yet when you have faid all, you have only faid it is a difficult matter to respect such an one because of his riches: still God has made him rich, and therefore he must be respected. The rich must be respected because they are rich; not because of the use they make of their riches. If they make a right use of them they have a title to our reverence in another character, and we must respect them not only because they are rich but also because they are good. The deceit, iniquity and pride of our hearts do in nothing shew themselves more plainly, than by the pretences we

are ready to make for bearing no inward honour and reverence toward superiors of every kind. How ready the plea is, he does not do his duty, he is a bad man, one cannot have any honour for him. True, not as a man, not as a christian, in that light you cannot reverence him; but as one whom God has diffinguished, you may and must honour him; it is no excuse that he is a bad man; the point is, God has honoured him by giving him distinction in his government of the world, and therefore you cannot withdraw your reverence without denying God's hand in the matter, and rejecting his authority. - As the rich must be Londared by others, so it is their duty to honour themselves by a humble temper of mind and a sincere endeayour to use their riches to the glory of God. You may see the whole of the rich man's christian temper and conduct in that direction given to Timethy; 6 Charge them who are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy: that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in ftore for themselves a good foundation against the time to come that they may lay hold on eternal life.1\* Let all who are rich in this world examine themselves by this passage.-Have they not been high-minded, puffed up on their wealth? The heart is ready to fuggest in such circumstances, now I am fomebody; to fwell and grow big upon it; to look down upon others; and to make little account of the gifts of fuch as are poorer. 'The rich man is wife in his own conceit,' faith Solomon, as if money did necessarily bring wisdom along with it.-Have they not trusted in their riches?' not trusted in them instead of God? I am sure we are naturally apt to trust in any thing rather than in the Lord, for it is only when we have found by experience there is help for us no way elfe that we thall trust in him. And how peculiarly difficult not to trust in our wealth, when we fee it affording us all the supports, comforts and conveniencies of the world, and to appearance delivering us from the polibility of want? ' Have they done 'good with their money?' For this reason have they valued and in this view have they used it? Nay but are they rich this way, in works of usefulness and charity? What matters it

they be otherwise rich, if they be not rich in good works? Not being so they have only sheaped treasure together for the last days: Have they been willing to communicate, ready to distribute, and so have they been storing up for the time to come? This is the rich man in God's account, not simply he that has riches, but he that uses his riches in good works: who for Christ's sake is continually making draughts on his purse, and transferring his substance into the funds of grace and glory.—That soul is in the very way to perish through want, who is rich in purse, yet poor in good works; who trusts in his riches, and boasts in his riches. Alas, such an one sets his eyes on that which is not; his riches certainly make themselves wings

and flee away.'t

Thirdly, Age makes a difference between men, and demands reverence and honour. 'Thou shalterife up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the Lordt.' Younger persons must behave with reverence towards those who are in years, and not carry themselves towards them as if they were their equals. ' Honour the face of the old man: I am the Lord.' I command and require thee to do fo; I will not have old age despised but honoured; and if thou do it not, though hoary heads cannot punish thee, yet I affuredly can and will. To reverence old age is not only a piece of good manners, but a point of duty: and therefore it is faid of Elibu, that he waited till 700 had spoken, because they were elder than he, 'I am young, and ye are very old, wherefore I was afraid, I durst not shew you mine opinion.' You see the practice of Elibu carries in it a reproof of the common pertness and forwardness of youth, who, conceited in their own fufficiency, will be opening themselves in every matter, and deciding that of which they who are three times their age modefly doubt. It is noted in Haiah as a curfethat goes along with the subversion of a state, 'That the children shall behave themselves proudly against the ancients.'|| And if so we have no cause to boast, I suppose, that our young people are men and women now some years sooner than they were wont to be formerly; that they affect with an unripe hafte to be their own masters, make little account of the aged, and want to thrust Вва

<sup>\*</sup> James v. 3. † Prov. xxiii. 5. ‡ Levit. xix. 32, § Job xxxii. 4. 6, || Isaiah iii. 5.

out of the world those of years and experience. - And if such respect and reverence be due to old people, they ought by a heavenly, grave, chearful and condescending conduct to put a crown of glory upon their own hoary heads. 'For the hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.'+ But if not, how signal a disgrace! how base and despicable a thing is that person who has outlived every thing but his vices! If there be nothing of grace upon his lips, who is just stepping into the grave, but his talk is vain, light, foolish, infignificant, lewd or profane, what a fnare is fuch an one to the young, how doth he tempt them to despise and cast off all reverence toward him! is fuch a grey head a crown of glory? What, when it affects the vanities of youth, when it mixes in the pleafures of boys and girls, when it casts off all reverence to itself, and feems industriously feeking to render itself ridiculous? 'Is this what age owes to God and to the growing generation? No, but as our bodies decay, so our souls should increase in gravity and foberness, in faith and love, and heavenly-mindedness and meekness. How dead should old age be to the world it is just leaving! O how detestable is covetousness and greediness, when the body is even dropping into the earth! and then how patient also, sweet, affable and gentle should they be! thus they shall adorn the gospel of Jesus Christ, and command the respect of But when they are feen more griping, distrustful, and worldly with their years; when they are impatient, fretful, peevish and froward; when their will may not be croffed a hair'sbreadth, and they have learnt nothing of meekness and forbearance, but are obstinate, continually angry and displeased with all about them; then where is the honour of the hoary head, or how can they complain if they are treated without respect and reverence?—And thus much of outward distinctions, and the duties arising from them.

Secondly, Besides these, are natural gifts and acquisitions; such as great parts, knowledge, learning, wildom and other gifts of the mind. Now as these, whatever they be, and in whatever measure ministered, are God's distributions, they must be used to his glory. You think you have more fense, more knowledge, more learning, difcretion and prudence than another. Suppose you have; from whom did you receive these distin-

guishing

guishing gifts? If from God, for what end? What, that like Abithophel a great politican,\* you might only ferve your own purposes by them, or like Tertullus, + pervert right? Did God give you them only to make you admired and esteemed, that you might make a figure in life, that people of a lower class in fuch gifts might truckle and bow before you, that you might difdain their flowness and ridicule their ignorance, boasting yourfelf on your own fuperiority? All this is abuse of such gifts, and yet very common is fuch abuse. It is no easy matter to be possessed of fuch gifts as make us differ, and yet to be humble in the use of them as if there were no difference. Did you never find your heart rifing up with pride and conceit, when you faw your preference to others in knowledge; when they have run upon fome mifadventure which they would have escaped had they followed your advice; when they have fought to you for direction and counsel, and the thing has prospered? Have you never boaftingly fet yourfelf off, and contrived to let people fee how expert, ready, fensible and knowing you were; nor triumphed in your heart at least, if not in terms, and sneered on the evidence of their infufficiency in comparison of you? Were you never impatient of others opinions, and eager to establish your own, as if you expected to be treated as an oracle? The most run great lengths this way, spoiling all by their felf-seeking, and prostituting to the ends of their own praise the eminent gifts God has bestowed upon them. What an instance of the contrary was St Paul! in him you fee great parts, and the most excellent gifts, put to a right use; not to adorn the man, but to adorn the gospel of Christ. So Moses had done before him; eminent as he was in all the knowledge of the Egyptians, and accomplished with the greatest natural and divine gifts, all was humbly devoted to the honour of God and the interests of his people. These are patterns set out for others of eminence this way to walk after. But do they tread in their steps, devoting their abilities to the fervice of the church of Christ, yea or even employing them in the civil interests of the community? Are they not rather used to selfish ends, to purchase reputation, interest and honour? And is not this too much the case in every profession? Even in the lowest ranks of men, what boasting, vaunting, and despising of others, doth not a little emi-

nence in their way produce?—But however this be, these things are the gifts of God, and therefore reverence is due to those on whom he has bestowed them. Such are considerable men. God has made them fo, and confequently marked them out for respect. Indeed let them behave as they will, the world could not well do without them, and therefore they are a bleffing from God. Indeed while they abuse their talents they turn their gifts to be a curfe unto themselves; and when God pleases they may be a fore judgement upon others: yet on the whole God over-rules, and makes them, act as they will, Labfervient to his ends in the government of the world. They must be honoured therefore, and it is a foul and base sin to be envious of them, to go about to lessen their endowments, to be continually at our buts and exceptions against them, and to be trying all the means in our power to bring them down to our frandard. This is a mischievous sin, derogates from God's gifts, and hurts their usefulness. How much doth it do so if these endowments be guided and directed by a functified heart, and the man of parts, learning, wildom and prudence, be laying himself out in the cause of religion and the present and future welfare of men! yet this is the way of a wicked world. -Even all the gifts of Jesus could not screen him from the imputation of having a devil and being mad.\* First the man has the character of being mad, and then they run him down. This was always the way of the world. But this leads us to the remaining head, which I shall speak to in the afternoon. From what you have heard this morning you may learn two things:

First. The adorable wisdom of God in the government of the world, which by diffributing the whole of mankind into various ranks, stations and feafons of life, as also by distiguishing some above others by gifts and endowments of the mind, has laid the plainest foundation for carrying on his government, forwarding the happiness of his creatures, and uniting us together in love. We may fee clearly that none of these excellent ends could have been answered, had there been an equality in all

these things between all men. And therefore,

Secondly, We may learn the very destructive nature of pride, which strikes at the root of God's design in all these wife distributions. Pride, by making superiors conceited and puffed up

on their distinctions, causes that they seek themselves, and not the glory of God, nor the happiness of others in the use of them; and on the other fide fuggesting impatient, undutiful and stubborn thoughts into the hearts of inferiors will not allow that their superiors shall be of any service. While God fays to the great, the wealthy, the aged and the wife, Seek my glory, feek the good of all men in thefe eminences I have bestowed upon thee; Pride cries with a louder cry, Thou are fomething, feek thyself. While God is commanding inferiors. Honour, reverence and fubmit to all those whom I have set over you; stubborn inbred Pride is claiming in them the right of independency and casting off all restraints. So dreadful a thing is pride; fo bleffed might we be, if we were but humble! and therefore let us pray God to humble us in the fight of our fins, and especially of those we have been guilty of against this Commandment, that while we cry for his mercy with broken hearts, we may grow disposed meekly to use his gifts one towards another, and chearfully to submit to those he has set above us in his fear for Jefus Christ's fake.—I am now,

Thirdly, To speak of the honour to be paid to spiritual attainments. Grace is God's best gift in this world, so wherever it is given in a faving degree, it must be possessed with much humility and devotedness to God's glory; as also on the other part

it must be esteemed and imitated.

The fcripture history records a variety of persons in the church, from the first age of the world, who were shining lights unto it, lived by faith, walked with God, and served him faithfully. And so it will be in all ages of the church, God will not leave himself without witness, but will raise up a people to his name. Doubtless however we live in these last and worst times, there is no inconsiderable number of such all over Christendom, men and women who have obeyed the divine invitation, laid hold on the offered mercy, and come out from the ways and practices of a wicked world. Now hereupon arises a double inquiry.

First, How must such persons demean themselves? Secondly, How must others carry it towards them?

First, How must they demean themselves? I answer First, With great humility. They may not indeed deny the gift of God, but they must think very meanly of themselves. And this is the best mark in the world of true grace, grace that will

stand all weathers and bear the shock of all temptations. Other graces make a greater shew, but without humility they have only the name of grace. Zeal and charity are well bottomed when they stand upon this; and it is this which gives the engaging sweetness of modesty and meekness unto both. fervant of Christ must think meanly of himself, must not have a lie in his right hand when he fays I am nothing, but must really mean what he fays, and experience that he fpeaks the very truth. How nothing? Why nothing in respect of any righteousness he has in him to justify him, or any strength of his own to walk in the ways of God; nothing, because he is fo corrupted, and all his best duties are so unprofitable; yea nothing, because whatever he has of his own does but serve to hinder and defile God's work in him. Thus he must think himfelf nothing; and when he does he will easily esteem others better than himself, and then he will despise no weak brother; he will not be proud and cenforiously prone to mark out others faults, because he knows so much of his own. This is the gracious man's great preservative against spiritual pride, which allowed would foon cause him to fall, and by his fall to bring fo much the greater dishonour on his Master, as his profession had been more eminent. If you mean to shoot up and to shew forth the fruits of an honourable profession, you must be sure that you go deep into your heart, and be truly lowly in the estimation you have of yourfelf .- And then

Secondly, You must use the grace God has bestowed on you to the benefit of others. How? Your life must be exemplary. You must look that your conduct do recommend the ways of God, and reprove the ways of darkness. This is the main step to usefulness. Your light must shine: shine not affectedly, not on purpose to be taken notice of, but your behaviour must be fuch as manifests the power of godliness to be in you. But is this all? Yes; nothing can be added more: for what can any do more than let the world fee they love the Lord Jefus Christ in fincerity, and are heartily affected toward the good of all men? You must cause that men see it every where and in all things. You must endeavour always to speak and act like a christian, and this from a real love of God and man; and when you do fo, you are in the high road of usefulness. If you speak like a christian, your words will not be corrupt but good to the use of edifying, and all with whom you converse may by

the bleffing of God be the better for you if they will; for it will not be your fault if you withhold not any thing from them wherein you can be profitable to them. If you at like a chriftian, you will in every thing you do be reproving vice and recommending godlinefs. So that as the true fervant of Chrift does not understand God has given him grace merely for himfelf, but for the benefit of others, so nis aim is to live, at and speak continually in such manner as that others may be the better for him.—Thus in humility and an edifying conduct lies the duty of those who have received that best of all God's gifts, his sanctifying grace. You will judge for yourselves how far you have come short, and I hope the consideration of that will serve to make you more humble. On the other part,

Secondly, How must others carry themselves toward such as are bleffed with his best gift, the grace of God? The answer is, they must lovingly esteem them and follow their example.-They must esteem and love them. This they ought to do, and this they will certainly do, if they have any love towards God in them: for Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.\* No man loves God for nothing, it is for the mercifulness, goodness, holiness, truth and faithfulness we fee to be in God, that we love him. And if we love thefe properties in God, when we see any of these things in men, we cannot but love them too. It is impossible we should hate holiness in the-child, if we love it in the father: if we hate men for their holiness we do most certainly, though we see it not, hate God for his holiness; for 'If we love not our brother whom we have feen, how can we love God whom we have onot feen?'+ Yet notwithstanding this, our Lord has taught all his followers how little they must expect the love and esteem of the world for their piety and godliness. 'Marvel not if the world hate you, you know it hated me before it hated you:' and then he adds the reason of this hatred of the world toward them, 'If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.'t-Now therefore, Brethren, have you loved or hated christian godliness wherever you have seen it? Has your heart risen with delight or with difgust toward those who would not live

as others do? Have you been ready to cover their infirmities. or fat as a fpy upon them to discover some flaw in their conduct for your own quiet's-fake? Judge for yourselves; but since the world began God never raised up a single man to himself, bestowing upon him the heavenly gift of true grace, but all graceless persons were immediately set against him, charging him with hypocrify, oftentation, and what not, for no other reason than because he would serve the God of his fathers. The true cause of which has always been, that the venom of the serpent lies unmortified in fuch graceless persons, who cannot therefore endure the fervants of God, and the followers of him who came to destroy the works of the devil. However, all those who bear the image of God in their hearts and lives ought, for that reason, to be esteemed and loved. also we must endeavour to follow them as far as they follow Christ. Has God sent light into the world merely to be looked at? No, but that we might be provoked thereby to good works. We should observe the conduct one of another to imitate it; if we fee in another a greater measure of humility. meekness, zeal, heavenly-mindedness and deadness to the world. that he is ftriving more earnestly to enter in at the strait gate, this should provoke and stir us up not to envy but to follow fuch an one. It is a great aggravation of our fin, that we are lazy and fit ftill, while we fee others running in the race who have but the same helps that we have: and by so doing we disappoint God's defign in fetting the examples of others before The more shining example of my neighbour I should regard as God's call to me; and while I fee fuch an one outstripping me, I should suppose God is saying to me by his good works, 'Up, awake sleeper, be doing, the time is at hand, the work is practicable, the enemies of your foul may be vanquished, heaven is set open, come, run, strive, enter, let ono man take thy crown.' And it is only fo far as I hear and obey this call, that I honour and reverence the grace of God in those whom God has distinguished by it.

And thus now at last we are come to an end with the fifth Commandment, upon which I have insisted the longer, both because it is least regarded, and also demands a conduct that is most expressive of the power of godliness. It is then Christ appears in his glory upon earth, when he does influence and sway our hearts to a religious observance of relative duties.—

But,

But, Brethren, how fadly have we, do we, come short! if after any Commandment, we have cause to humble our souls and cry for mercy, pleading the righteousness of Christin our favour, it is after this. And it will behave us to make diligent search hereupon, to prove and try ourselves, that we may sue out the pardon in season, and obtain grace for the keeping this law.—Happy, yea beyond expression blessed shall we be, if when the

Lord cometh he shall find us so doing!

And now I dismiss these discourses on the Law for the prefent, having already much outrun my design of speaking to them only in Lent: but I thought it unadvisable to stop in the midst of the social duties. If God permit, we shall resume this subject with the return of the year. But who knows what may be in the counsels of God ere that time come? Where you or I may be? We know nothing of to-morrow; this day is only ours. Let us work then to day, for we hasten to our end, we are passing off the stage, and doubtless many of us are at the very end of our part, perhaps I am speaking the last words of mine. If so, my last words are, "May the Lord Almighty bless you, direct you into all truth, and bring you to everlasting life, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord." Amen.

## SERMÓN XLI.

#### GALATIANS iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

THE season \* is now returned wherein we are to prosecute the explanation of the Ten Commandments, in that view wherein the text doth partly at least represent the Law; namely, a Schoolmaster to make known our sins, and by the terror of its curse and scourge to drive us to Christ. The five first Commandments have been fully spoken to. And I now go forward to open before you the sixth, Thou shalt do no murder.

There are two things you know in every Commandment, fomething required, and fomething forbidden; and these two always contrary the one to the other; which do in fuch manner go together, that we cannot omit what a Commandment requires, but thereby we do what it forbids; or do what it forbids, but we omit what it requires; as, if a man murders his neighbour, he not only does what this Commandment forbids, but most manifestly slights all those duties of love and kindness it injoins upon him. And so on the other part, if he neglect to give of his ability to his distressed brother, as this law commands, he is therein guilty of that cruelty which it plainly forbids. - And farther it must be observed, that as respective fins according to the nature of the Commandment are forbidden, fo to come short in any measure or thing of that duty which a Commandment requires and injoins, is to be guilty of a trespass against it; so that as far, for example, as we come short of that love to others both in temper and conduct, which this Commandment directs, we are guilty of

<sup>\*</sup> Preached at Truro, February 26, 1758.

breaking it.—With these observations before us let us now endeavour to lay open the fixth Commandment for examination.

Thou shalt do no murder And it may be best understood and remembered when distributed under these three heads.

First. The disposition of heart,

Secondly, The speech,

Thirdly, The conduct it requires of us towards one another.

And first, of the disposition of heart it injoins us to bear one towards another. Thou shalt do no murder; that is, regarding the disposition of the heart, thou shalt neither bear an envious, revengeful, nor cruel temper of mind towards any of thy brethren; but exercise over them a complacential, meek and

compassionate disposition.

First, Thou shalt not bear an envious, but thou shalt bear a complarential spirit towards others. - Envy, strictly speaking, is that inward hatred of another for some good thing he has, which we have not, but with for. Hence, according to the fame strictness of speech, there is this difference to be observed between envy and jealoufy, (though they be both daughters of the same mother pride) that hatred of those who have what we have not, but wish to have, is envy; hatred of those who, though they have not yet, feem in the way to have beyond us, is jealoufy. But notwithstanding this be true in exact propriety of words, yet these two are to be understood in the fcripture to fall under the word envy, as indeed they do alfo in our common language. For the fact and nature of jealoufy; you may find many instances of it in the scripture, such as Saul's hatred of David left he should go beyond him in military reputation; and Haman's hatred of Mordecai, because he was advancing in favour of king Ahafuerus; and Herod's and the chief Priests hatred of Christ, lest he should take from them their worldly greatness. But what need of scripture instances, when the world is every day fo full of them? And when with our wretched hearts it is crime enough to incur diflike, that any are coming near us in the thing for which we are diffinguished? Whose heart has not known jealousy; a secret rising of diflike, which, if unrestrained, has settled into hatred, against those we feared were overtaking us? Indeed it cannot be otherwise, while we are proud of that, whatever it be, which distinguishes us; whether it be station, or wealth, or knowledge, or skill in a profession, or strength, or beauty, or No. 6.

even drefs, or (faddeft of all) even gifts and graces of the holy Spirit. And then for hatred of those who go beyond us in any thing; what a fearful instance have we thereof in Cain towards his own brother Abel? And what had poor Abel done? Just nothing, but that he was the better man of the two. That was fault enough with Cain's proud heart. His countenance fell, it is faid; that is, envy might be feen in his countenance towards his brother; he could not endure the fight of him. And what what was the issue? Why first he murders himself, as I may fay, with spite and vexation; and then took an opportunity, when they were in the field together, to rife up against and flay his brother. And what is all envy but murder in the heart? And who is free from it? He knows little of himself who has not feen that his natural heart is ready enough to wish those, who stand in his way, out of his way at any rate. Horrid iniquity of fallen man! 'What indeed is man, that he flould be clean, and he that is born of a woman, that he 6 should be righteous!'\* That inoffensive child Joseph! what was his fault? His father was fond of him; and therefore his brethren must hate him; envy lies rankling in their hearts, till they cast off all pity. Such is the real character of nature unrestrained, hateful to and hating one another. + This envy is a raging fin in the world. The effects of it are not always alike terrible; but the thing itself is beyond measure finful; yet that man is stark blind who thinks he has never had any inclinations and stirrings of envy in his heart; and he has been a godly man indeed, who has at no time in any degree indulged them. Such are jealoufy and envy, the daughters of pride; you may easily know by their features, that their father is no other than the devil.

But should you be able to say you are free concerning envy, you may not therefore think you are quit of the demands of this law upon this head; for it not only forbids that malignant spirit, but it does not permit you to be indifferent about the prosperity of your neighbour in soul and body; it requires you to rejoice in it; and that it is plain you do not, if you are only indifferent whether it goes well or ill with your neighbour.—God has made us members one of another; all one by nature, and he expects we should all be so by grace; and therefore his

will is that we all love one another: which doubtless we do not, if the prosperity of others gives us no pleasure. The main thing he would have us rejoice in concerning others, is the prosperity of their souls, that with regard to godliness and glory they are in a thriving condition; and also that our joy over them should be in proportion to the measure of grace and godliness we see in them; and so of course, the closer we see any walking after Christ, the better we should be pleased, and the more complacency we should take in them; yea when we fee much more distinguished christians than ourselves. This the law requires. Judge you for yourselves whether you have not come short of it. But then also it reaches to the temporal conditions of our neighbours; we must not regard their worldly prosperity with an envious eye; but must rejoice therein as far as there is ground for doing fo, that is, as far as we fee grace along with prosperity to use it to God's glory: for otherwife prosperity is indeed a curse from God, and such a thing therefore as he who loves his neighbour's foul cannot rejoice in. As we may not bear an envious, fo neither,

Secondly, May we bear a revengeful temper towards any of our neighbours, but must be disposed in meekness of spirit toward all and every one of them. Here, whatever many may think of the littleness of such things, all causeless anger, and all that resentment which lies upon the heart concerning those we are displeased with, and most of all when it settles into malicious hatred against them, with wishes and contrivances of revenge in any fort or way; all these, being in their very nature selfish and devilish, are peremptorily condemned by this commandment. Christ explains it in this very manner himself, in order to shew us the abundance of our guilt. I say unto you, whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, (upon any felfish confideration) shall be in danger of the judgement.\* And if so seemingly light a thing as hasty, rash anger, which quickly passes away perhaps, makes us liable to the curse of the law, what shall we think of the matter when the injury really or supposedly received, fixes an allowed distance, disgust and resentment on the heart, at last settles into downright malice, and brings forth wishes and contrivances of retaliation? You may fee the whole of this in its true light in the conduct of Jacob's

Cc2

two.

two fons, Simeon and Levi, towards the Shechemites, because of the injury done their fister Dinah\*. First they fell into rash anger; it is faid, 'When the fons of Jacob heard of it, the men were grieved, and they were very wroth.' Wroth, you will fay! why should they not? was there not a cause? No, not for fuch an anger as theirs, which was not fo much for the dishonour done to God, as for the affront put on themselves, as you may fee by the last verse of the chapter, 'Should he deal with our fifter as with an harlot?' There in the words our fister lay the grief; the honour of the family was stained; this shews plainly enough of what temper chiefly their anger was. And, O! with what a furious look, and vehement tone I warrant you, they spoke these words to their father! But it did not stop here. Their anger rested in their bosom, and settled in a fixed refentment, the scandal lay upon their minds, they could by no means reconcile themselves to put up with the wrong: and under this spirit no one about them I dare say could have a good word or a kind look from them. At length Shechem's love to their fifter gave them a fair opportunity of revenge.-This was fweet to them. And now they could diffemble friendship, and lie, and make a cloke of religion to bring about their purpose. Till all things having answered their black defigns, they took their fwords, and without remorfe or pity flew not only Shechem but old Hamor his father, with all the males they could lay their hands upon. And then their brethren fell in also, and carried off, like a company of plunderers and robbers, all they could get. You fee here a terrible instance of rash anger, of the horrid effects it will produce, and the great fin of not leaving vengeance unto God. How far any thing like this may have been our case, whether we have not been often guilty of rash and sinful anger, whether anger has not fettled into resentment, and we have not meditated and taken revenge as far at least as the fear of punishment and the restraint of the laws of the land would permit us, I must leave every one to enquire for himself. -But lest any may think they have little or no blame on this head, because they are not of this hot passionate humour, and love to be quiet, and so for the fake of their own ease make no stir upon every trisle; we must consider, that by this commandment those dispositions

of mind towards others, which are the direct contraries to this angry furious revengeful spirit, and which fall under the ge-

neral word meekness, are injoined upon us.

As first, We must bear a kind and courteous temper of heart towards others, as being members of ourselves; we and they being of one blood, and having the same Father; for which reason a man of 'strife and debate, and that strikes with the fift of wickedness,' is said by the Prophet Isaiab, 'to hide himself from his own sless.'\* This temper is set out by St Peter as that great ornament in wives which God makes much account of in them: but it is as true of their husbands, and of all men, as of them, that 'the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit is in the fight of God of great price.

Secondly, A disposition to construe every thing in the best part. To hope all things, even the best we can, and to see every thing in the most favourable light respecting all men, enemies as well as friends, is what this commandment requires, of us. And surely it is but an ill token of true affection and love, if we be waiting as it were to find fault, greedy to swallow the least accusation against another, ready to believe it, and forward to make the worst of it. This shews a mali-

cious and revengeful spirit.

Thirdly, Another part of this meekness is a forgiving temperForgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you? as much as to say, No man can receive such
injuries from another, as himself hath offered to and been forgiven by God; and therefore God expects you should lay
aside all of you all thoughts of revenge, and forgive one another
from your hearts. And let us remember there is no limitation to this command, because of the greatness of the injury
done us. Whatever it be, we must forgive it, and be ready
in the sincerity of our hearts to return good for it, as if it had
never been offered. He that cannot bring his heart to this, to
forgive his enemy, and do him good, is a transgressor of this
commandment, and liable to the fearful judgement of God for
the same; as you may see in the parable recorded at the end of
the eighteenth chapter of St Matthew.

And fourthly, a peaceable temper is another branch of meeknefs. We must be of that temper, as, if it be possible, and C c 3

<sup>\*</sup> Isaiah lviii. 4, 7. † 1 Pet. iii. 4. ‡ Ephes. iv. 32.

as much as lieth in us, to live peaceably with all men."—We must really desire to be at peace with all men, and use all honest endeavours actually to be so. We must do nothing, as far as we may avoid it, that will any way tend to open a breach or to keep it open; and where it is once opened, we must not stand upon niceties, but give up any thing in our power to get it healed. 'What care I for their displeasure?' If they be angry, they must be pleased again. Shall I submit to such an one? Such speeches are marks, however common,

of a very ungentle and ungodly spirit.

But Thirdly, we may not be of a cruel, but must be of a compassionate disposition. Not cruel either to our neighbours fouls or bodies. Not to their fouls. There is nothing in which man can fo nearly refemble the devil, as by rejoicing at the fall and fin of another. Yet doubtless there were fuch at Corinth, whose cruelty herein set the apostle upon putting them in mind of their great uncharitableness in so doing. Charity, faith he, rejoiceth not in iniquity; + and therefore of what temper are fome of you, who, envious of the religious attainments of others, are waiting for their halting, and ready to rejoice at it; yea, and that so much the more, as they have been eminent in their profession? Then again, as we may not rejoice in others fins, so may we not lead any into fin; as those do who take pleafure in making others drunk, or in putting them upon any kind of wickedness. Nor may we make a mock at fin in others, turning it into a laughing matter; for this tends to harden them, and shews much cruelty toward their fouls in our hearts. Nor finally may we encourage any fin by our example and conduct, as not concerned what influence our behaviour may have upon them, fo we feem to keep ourselves unhurt. These, and the like, are great marks of a cruel merciles disposition towards the souls of others, and high provocations against God; whose will is that we should be of the very contrary temper, tenderly affectioned to each others fouls. He condemns a careless indifference about the salvation and spiritual estate of our neighbours, as though we should say, What care I what becomes of my neighbours, fo I myfelf get fafe to heaven? Truly this is not the way thither. God will have us to compassionate poor sinners, to mourn and weep for them.

them, and be ready to do every thing we can for their good. This was Christ's spirit; he mourned in the very bottom of his heart for finners, he wept over lost Jerusalem, and was ready to fuffer any thing for our fouls fake. And as far as we have come short of his temper, we have transgressed this commandment. And then as to mens temporal concerns, all merciless rejoicing over, yea and indifference to their afflictions, whether in body or estate, is here condemned. Self-love and worldly interest are ready to beget this spirit of cruelty in us. You fee how they did it in wicked Herod respecting the poor infants; \* and in the Priest and Levite in the case of the wounded traveller; + and we may fee the like effects of them upon the hearts of the covetous every day. O what an unfeeling, cruel, tyrannical, oppressive temper, doth there arise out of the love of money, and the lust of power! how has this temper raged through the world, destroyed the inhabitants thereof, and shut out pity and compassion towards any objects of misery! in greater or less degree it is probable it has infected us all: for have we always, and as we ought, pitied the poor; mourned with the afflicted; felt for the oppressed orphan and widow, and delivered them as we might out of the hand of the oppreffor? As members of the same body, have we been afflict. ed with the fons and daughters of forrow, and ready to comfort them with our words, liberalities and prayers? Yet this is compassion: and by failing in any part of the whole extent thereof, we have trespassed against this holy law of God.

And so much for the disposition of heart required by this commandment. Of which I have spoken thus largely, because the life and spirit of this law lies herein; and because, if we are tolerably free from outward gross acts of envy, revenge and cruelty, we are apt to imagine this commandment has no charge of guilt against us. A short word will be sufficient upon each of the other two heads: and therefore I have only

to observe on the

Second head, that we must indulge and gratify neither envy, revenge nor cruelty in our tongues; but from a real affection one towards another our words must be charitable and kind. Yet when envy, refentment or unmercifulness, are in the heart, how impossible is it to confine the tongue! Consider now, Cc4

how

how have you spoken of those your heart disliked, because they were more eminent than yourfelf in wealth, skill, or piety; in short of those who stood in your way? What, was there never any bitterness upon your tongue, nothing of the poison of asps under your lips, no words tending needlessly to lessen them, no artful infinuation of their defect? Yet all these were envious speeches. Or again, did your tongue never transgress the bounds of meekness in speaking of those who had injured you indeed, or you thought had done fo? What, at no time did you use any contemptuous words to them or reproachful words of them, by complaining to any one you met how ill they had used you, and how abominable they were? Has your tongue, I say, never been set on fire by the hell of resentment and revenge, and been employed in doing mischief to an enemy? Or finally, have your words been ever free of cruelty and full of mercy? You know how Shimei curfed David in distress: \* and did you never speak a disdainful word to your brother in the day of his trouble? The Pharifees looking on Jesus hanging on the cross wagged their heads, and said, Ah thou: + and did you never shake your head at a brother fallen from prosperity, or cry Ah thou, pride will have a fall; or by any cruel word add reproach to affliction? Ohow gracious were all the words that proceeded out of the mouth of Jefus! Shew me one envious, revengeful, cruel word, in all that he spoke! Upon his tongue was the law of kindness, because on his heart was the law of love. We have all need to be ashamed, remembering how little we have taken heed to our ways, not to commit murder against our brother with our tongue.

The third thing was our conduct. Thou shalt not do any damage to thy brother in soul or body, but shalt do him all the good thou canst in both. You say, I never murdered any one, I never took away the life of my neighbour; but have you been no striker? God allows not that; he says, Vengeance is mine. But did you never do damage to other peoples souls? Have you never put them upon sin? or if not, have you never led them into or encouraged them in sin? Here we are all guilty; we have all led others into sin whether we designed it or no, and that by our example; yea, and I am sure we have encouraged them in sin by not setting our whole insluence against

gainst it. And this, who will say he has not done? who will say he has done what he might for the help of poor sinners, and for the establishment of such as are seeking God? What minister, what magistrate, what parent, what mafter, what man of wealth, what man of knowledge, will say this? Sirs, the charge of murdering souls lies against us all. The Lord give us grace to repent it heartily! The Lord deliver us from this blood-guiltiness! The Lord enable us to do good to the souls one of another, according to our power, the rest of our days!

I have only to observe farther, that the Law, Thou shalt do no murder, is expressed in such general terms, as plainly to prohibit our doing any hurt to ourselves in body or soul, and to enjoin the taking all due care of the one and the other. Our souls and bodies are God's. Therefore we must neglect neither, nor can we do damage to either of them without incurring the curse of God. And if so, what shall become of those worst of murderers, those who murder themselves, those who murder their souls and bodies too, those who are doing this continually for years together? And yet this is most evidently the case of all drunkards especially, of all gluttons, and also of fornicators and whoremongers for the most part.—But if you would hear more on this head, I must refer you to the catechising in the evening, when what you have now heard will be illustrated and improved.

# SERMON XLII.

#### GALATIANS iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

HILE our conduct has been brought under examination by the Law of God; and while in passing from one Commandment to another, we are found guilty of every one of them; whence is it that we are so little moved at the fight of what we have done, so little concerned about the curse threatened against us for our transgressions, and that the publican's cry,\* fo exactly fitted to our case, rises so coldly on our heart? Jesus sits at the right hand of God; from that exalted place he looks down upon us; feated in glory he lifts up his voice, 'Come, finners, come to me and be faved; guilty condemned perifhing finners, come to me. My blood shall cleanse you from all your fins, your fins shall not be your destruction; come to me and live. Thus Jesus invites .- But how is it, that we are so slow of coming? Is there no certainty in God's law, no reality that we have broken it, or nothing terrible in the curse it threatens us with? Alas, all these are certain, real and terrible: but our hearts, our stubborn hearts! there lies the mischief. Neither the terrors of Sinai, nor the more moving language of Calvary; neither judgement nor mercy; neither death nor life; neither hell nor heaven, will move them, or move them but a little. We have been already condemned in our own consciences by fix of God's Commandments: but are we fled for refuge to Jesus from the storm of God's wrath? Yea, are we all come nearer to him in the increafing fight of our vileness? Then my labour has not been

Hunger

in vain. But if not; if our iniquity has not found us out, and we are still insensible to our misery and unsolicitous about God's mercy, how is our guilt increased by so much fruitless pains used upon us! how can we answer it now to our own consciences! how shall we answer it to Jesus when he comes in his glory! We should seriously consider, that sin committed, how long soever ago, is guilt contracted; that guilt contracted, is punishment insured; that punishment insured will never be remitted but only by the mercy of God in the merits of a Redeemer; and that mercy will never be ours, unless we humbly, heartily and penitently sue for it. You see the use we should make of the Commandments. I pray you set yourselves thus to improve them. May the Lord so bless what I am now to

fay on the feventh Commandment to all your fouls.

As we are men, and so the one part of our composition is body, we have all animal defires and appetites in common with other fensitive creatures; hunger, thirst, and the like, are common to us with all the animal world. But then feeing we are reasonable beings also, and should be religious, God will have these animal appetites kept in due subjection, and directed according to the measures he has prescribed for that purpose: that is to fay, no animal appetite must be allowed to usurp a place that does not belong it, by engroffing the heart, and taking to itself the direction of our minds and wills; but must be kept within such bounds, and ordered by such rules. as God has fet it. When thus kept in subjection, and thus ordered, as it has nothing finful in itself, being purely animal. fo it will answer the great purpose of preservation for which God designed it. And this is the rule of duty regarding the natural appetites of hunger and thirst. Meat and drink must be used for preservation, and therefore the natural desire of them must be kept within the bounds of a sober moderation. To delight the foul in the expectation of them, and to use them with excess is intemperance. And so it is regarding that animal appetite more specially designed in this Commandment. When indulged in the heart with delight it becomes a finful lust, and when gratified out of the bounds God has prescribed to it, it becomes a finful act, varying according to the nature of the act itself, as committed with others or with our own bodies only, and so called fornication, adultery, felf-pollution, and other abominable names, which I care not to mention .-

Hunger is no excuse for gluttony, nor thirst for drunkenness; no more is that other animal appetite for lust and uncleanness: gluttony, drunkenness, lust, are first in the heart, there they defile the foul, and turn the reasonable man into a very animal; and from the heart they come out in such various acts as respectively belong to each of them.

What has been faid may ferve to shew that the general defign of the Commandment is to keep our bodies in a due state of subjection to our spirits: and therefore that there are these two great duties enjoined upon us by it, chassity and temperance.

First, It requires us to be chaste; now from what was just above advanced, you understand there is an inward and out-

ward chastity.

Inward chastity is keeping the heart for God, not suffering it to be defiled by any unchaste and filthy delights. 'Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart',\* is Christ's interpretation of the spiritual meaning of this Commandment. what he fays of looking upon a woman to lust after her, must be extended to all manner of unclean defires. We must harbour no fuch guests. Whenever we do, we hurt our own fouls, and fin against God. Every indulgence of this kind is a fin.—But then how much more, when these are formed into habits, and lewdness is the very character of the foul, takes fire at every object, is entertained and even courted, and speaks at every look; when, as the scripture expresses it, it appears with a whore's forehead, and eyes full of adultery? What a ghastly creature then I how deformed in the fight of man and God!-Chastity must reign upon our hearts; heaven-born chastity, the daughter of divine love: and her child modesty must be with her; modesty, harmless in look, decent in apparel, referved in gesture, innocent in words, her face apt to blush, and her back turned upon every appearance of indecency.

Chastity is also outward, expressive of that purity of heart which lodges within. The hand, the tongue, the eye, every member of the body must be kept pure: and accordingly all kind of actions, which are in any degree contrary hereto, are absolutely condemned. 'It is a shame', saith our apostle, 'even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret'.+

But

But he had before faid what kind of things they were, 'Fornication, and all uncleanness, let it not be once named amongst' you, as becometh faints. Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God' † Most peremptorily every act of uncleanness is condemned; I refer the parties concerned to the particulars, being both ashamed, and also holding it improper to speak of them. Only, considering the importance and need there is in this our day of the alarming remark, I would observe concerning fornication and adultery, that they are sins which damn two souls at once; and yet that self-uncleanness is held by divines to be a greater sin than either of them.

Secondly, Temperance is the other duty required by this Commandment. By temperance is meant an holy moderation concerning meat, drink, sleep and relaxation, Now intemperance is here forbidden in a double respect, both as it is an indulgence of the body, and as by being so, it ministers oc-

casion to, and nourishes lust.

First, Intemperance is prohibited for its own fake. The heart must not be in any of these things to delight in them, nor the body be indulged in them. You may not fet your heart upon eating, be nice and curious about it, nor eat beyond the refreshment of nature; this is gluttony: And I am fure the fcriptures rank gluttony and drunkenness in the same degree of finfulness, however we may have learnt to do otherwise. You may not set your heart upon drink, nor use it to excess: if you do you are a drunkard. And take it with you, that God will judge, whether you have loved or indulged in drink by his reckoning, not yours. You may not fancy it to be no fin to love your pillov and to indulge yourfelf there, when God would have you up to pray and labour. You may not fet your heart on relaxations; as far as you do, You are a lover of pleasures, more than a lover of God; \* and if you give yourself up to them, squander your time upon them, and lose yourself in them, though man may not condemn you for it, yet affuredly God will. These, gluttony, drunkenness, sloth and idleness, are bodily indulgences, and absolutely forbidden. They set the

For what need of being a reasonable creature, to eat, and drink, and fleep, and be idle? The beaft of the field can do this as well as we. Questionless, God has given us a reasonable soul for higher purposes: and doubtless he expects a better account from us of the use we have made of that noble distinction, than to have levelled ourselves with the brutes. Could a brute speak, would it be any other language than this, Let us eat and drink, and be merry: alas, that ever this should be the language of reasonable man! that so many of mankind should have lost

the thought and inclination of speaking any other!

But fecondly, Intemperance is not only prohibited as it is finful in itself, but also as it gives occasion to, and nourishes lust. And this a life of indulgence does: it is the very food of lust. The grievous fin of Sodom is afcribed to this very cause in the prophet Ezekiel. 'Behold, this was the iniquity of thy fifter Sodom. Pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me.'\* And Jeremiah fpeaks in the very fame manner of the Jews. 'When I had fed them to the full, then they committed adultery, and af-• fembled themselves by troops in the harlots houses. They were as fed horses in the morning,' (what can so strongly represent a body pampered with indulgence! the consequence follows) 'every one neighed after his neighbour's wife.'+ Thus lust is the effect of a body gratified in meat, drink, sloth and idlenefs.-Yea, and if we confider only either of thefe feparately, we may find scripture instances of horrible lusts committed under the influence of each of them. Thus what made the Sodomites so wanton but fulness of bread? That is, their delicate living and high feeding? What made Lot commit fuch dreadful incest with his own daughters, but drunkenness? Or what filled David, or his fon Amnon after him, with fo much lust but a fit of sloth and idleness? The case of Amnon is very particular. In the heat of his youth, and no doubt in the abundance of floth and idleness also, being the king's fon, he was fallen in love with Tamar his brother Abfalom's fifter. Instead of taking any methods of selfdenial.

<sup>\*</sup> Ezekiel xvi. 49,50.

<sup>†</sup> Jer. v. 7, 8. § 2 Sam. xi. 2.—xiii. 1,—14.

denial, it is faid, 'he was fo vexed, that he fell fick for his fifter Tamar;' that is, he gave way to the passion, and let it occupy his whole foul, leaving no room for other employment. Sloth now and idleness had their full power; and his unclean defires grew to fuch a head, that he is ready to facrifice every thing to his inclination. He readily complies with the wicked counsel of his friend Jonadab. He lays himself down on his bed and feigns himself sick, his father comes to fee him; it is his father must fend his own daughter and Amnon's own fifter to be facrificed to his passion; and while she is affectionately doing him the kindest offices, he takes advantage of them to ruin her. What a scene of villainy, hypocrify and ingratitude was here! Was there ever a more dreadful scene acted! It cost him his life quickly after: but he was so under the absolute dominion, so under the raging influence of passion, that he considered no consequences; and lust made him fet no value upon (I do not fay his conscience, for it is plain he had none, but) his honour and his life.—And now after fuch instances, we may cry, if we will, what harm is there in living high, in taking a glass, and following indolence, ease and pleasures, so one can afford such things? Why, if there were not, which yet there is, any fin in fuch indulgences feparately and in themselves considered, yet you see what provocatives they are to lust: and so I doubt not all have found them who have given themselves to them.

And therefore this commandment, which regards chastity, does enjoin us all such means as serve to restrain lust; and these are the contraries of this gluttony, drunkenness, sloth and idleness, by which it is promoted. 'I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection,'\* faith St Paul. Well, and how did he do this? What, by faring sumptuously, and drinking plentifully, living at his ease, and doing little or nothing? No. We hear nothing of his feastings, but he tells us, 'He was in fastings often. He tells us, he suffered much hunger and thirst, that he was in labours more abundant, and knew what it was to undergo weariness and painfulness, cold and nakedness.'† By such a life as this it was he kept under his body and brought it into subjection. And you see the will of God is, that in order to our purity in heart and life.

we should.

First, Be moderate in the use of meats and drinks, and, as need is, give ourselves to fasting and abstinence. We must learn and practife the lesion of 'putting the knife to our throat, if we be given to appetite.'\* The meaning is, we must not indulge our palates in the quantity or variety of the things fet before us; but always use such a moderation as rather to keep on the fide of too little, than run any hazard of too much. -Nor must we always eat, even what nature requires, but abstain at proper seasons, for the better keeping the body in subjection to the spirit. Fasting is most certainly recommended in scripture, but just as prayer is to be used, as need requires and discretion directs. You observe I am not speaking of more folemn fasts enjoined by authority, but of private ones recommended by the example of scripture Saints, and called for by the necessities of our own fouls. If you will not submit to this moderation and abstinence, do not wonder if you cannot preserve the chastity of your heart or life.

Secondly, Be diligent in your calling. Labour keeps the mind employed, and the body under; whereas sloth both genders lust, and gives it opportunity. If you are idle, the flesh will be busy; and how fair an occasion do you give it by having nothing else to do, but to attend upon it! If you will be crying upon your bed, 'A little more sleep, a little more slumber;' if you will put your hands in your bosom, instead of putting them to your work; if you see a lion in your shop, and cannot endure to be in it: what advantage could lust defire, which you do not yield to it? You must not be idle; we must be all employed; God has work for us all in the wold, and indeed the most for those who seem to have the least to do. Application must both keep under the body, and find engagement for the soul. And this will go a great way to-

And lastly, We must be aware of the recreations we use, and how we use them. They must be innocent in themselves,

wards preferving chaftity.

(and that many of them are not) else they are both a fin and a fnare. It has been supposed that when 'Dinah went to see (that is, to visit) the daughters of the land, the went upon an unwarrantable errand. Probably she was mixed with them in their idelations foots and dances when Shechem took her.

in their idolatrous fports and dances, when Shechem took her,

and lay with her.—Nor must relaxations only be in themselves innocent, they must be also used innocently, if we mean not to be hurt by them. We are not to go to them in an unguarded frame, or forget ourselves in them, for then we lay ourselves open to temptation; and we must not give that time to them which is owing to more important employments, for then they are in truth direct bodily indulgences; and so it can

be no wonder if they give occasion to lust.

I thought these hints concerning the means of chastity, arising from the head of temperance, to be no improper conclusion of a discourse on the seventh commandment. In speaking to which you will easily see, that, because of the delicacy of the subject, many things of the chiefest importance, and which are most signally aimed at by this law, have been but glanced upon by the way, and left to every one's own more retired and deliberate reslection. The spirituality of this commandment has, I hope, been made plain; and is now submitted to your serious consideration. May the Lord in mercy bless it to us all, for Jesus Christ's sake.

# SERMON XLIII.

### GALATIANS, iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

SIN is the transgression of the Law\*. And if every transgressfion of the Law be a fin; whence comes it, that while our fins are fo many, our apprehensions are fo slight? Some indeed tremble, neither does all their frequent hearing of the merit of a Redeemer's blood still the clamour of their consciences. But others, the most, sin and fear not; not all the terrors of Sinai move them, though all those terrors be actually thundering against them. And how dreadful are they! Let the manner of giving the Law speak, though it can but faintly figure the terrors of the wrath of an avenging God. Be ready, faid the Lord, against the third day, for the third day the Lord will come down in the fight of all the people. Set bounds unto the people; fay to them, Take heed, go onot up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be furely put to death, whether it be beaft or man, it shall not live: when the trumpet foundeth long, they shall come up to the mount. -And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; fo that all the people that were in the camp trembled.—And Mofes brought forth the people out of the camp to meet God .-And Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord dec scended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as • the

the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet founded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.—And God came down on mount Sinai on the top of the mount. And all the people faw the thunderings and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain fmoking: and when the people faw it, they removed, and stood afar off. - And said, Let not God speak with us, eleft we die. - And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.'\* Thus God appeared terrible in giving the Law: what will the terrors be, when he shall come to avenge himself of the transgressors of it! What will be the terrors of a judgment-day, a day of recompence, whereof God himself had faid, 'Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven+!' O sinners, our God is a confuming fire: and who of you will be able to stand when He appeareth? Now is the day of falvation. Death hasteneth, Then your day is over. Humble yourselves. Come to Jesus. Live.

I am now to explain to you the eighth Commandment.-

Thou Shalt not Real.

The great duty required by this Commandment is contentedness, and the great fin forbidden is covetousness. God will have us, as those who depend on him, and live entirely by his bounty, to be content with fuch things as we have, because they are, be they more or less, what he gives us, and judges fittest to bestow on us. He will have us trust in him for our daily bread, and all the bleffings of life: and reckons it a great dishonour done him, when we are careful and anxious for the things we really need, and much more when we fet ourfelves to defire the things we need not. Take notice therefore, that contentment is being quiet and fatisfied with God's care of us in worldly things, chearfully using what he gives us to-day, and nothing doubting he will provide for us to-morrow, in the way of our duty and diligent labour in our calling. far as we fail of this quiet fatisfiedness in God's fatherly care of us, are afraid to use what he gives us, or anxious about the morrow, we come finfully short of contentedness, and are guilty of covetousness. The nature of which fin of covetousness lies therefore in these two things. Firsta

D D 2

First, An unbelieving distrust of God concerning those things of the world which we really need for ourselves and families. It is a great fin against God to question his bleffing upon our honest labour. It both denies that he orders all things by his wife and good providence, and also flatly gives the lie to his plainest promises. God will bless the honest labours of fuch as trust in him: and fuch do believe that what

he fends is best for them, be it little or much.

Secondly, The other ingredient in covetousness is carnal defire, putting us a lusting after the things we really need not: whether pride, hungering after worldly wealth, because of the prefent honour that attends the possessor of it, or love of indulgence, that defires to have wherewith to gratify its lufts .-These two are the first principles of covetousness; and would you trace up any covetous defire to its fountain-head, you thould find it arose either from an unbelieving mistrust of God for what was necessary, or from a carnal defire of what was not fo. Both the one and the other of which are theft in the fight of God, and that ' love of money, which,' he affures us, is the root of all evil\*.' Let this fuffice for the inward difposition required or condemned by this Commandment. In which as far as we are wanting, we shall also be likely to transgrefs in the outward duties enjoined upon us, and be found in the practice of injustice, niggardliness, and wastefulness, which three include all manner of stealing.

The first outward sin here forbidden is injustice, to which we shall be fadly pushed by covetousness, if it be in our hearts, whether it arise from a distrust of God's providence regarding the things we really need, or from the infatiable defires begotten in us by the pride of life and the luft of indulgence, after the things we really do not need. And here I must proclaim aloud against that worldly maxim, 'Sell as dear, and buy as cheap, as you can,' as absolutely dishonest; being most directly contrary to that rule of our Lord's: 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye unto them. 'God does not admit that as a good character, ' to be a man of sharpe ness in business; which, if I understand it right, is to have the wit of outwitting others. There is a market price in all traffic, and that every man ought contentedly to take or give.

But to buy as cheap and fell as dear as I can, is to take the liberty of availing myself of another's ignorance or necessity; which is a treatment I should not like toward myself. As far therefore as any, either in the whole or part of their dealings with others, have acted upon this wicked maxim, however they may be esteemed honest in the fight of men, they are accounted no better nor other than downright thieves in the fight of God: and however good they may have boasted themselves to have been in making a bargain in this world, unless they repent, they will find they have made a very bad one another day. judgeth not as man judgeth: and therefore consider, as before him, how you have dealt with others in the traffic you have had with them; whether a defire of gain has not made you step aside from plain honesty in buying or selling. In buying, by undervaluing and running down the goods you would purchase, It is naught, it is naught\*. By availing yourfelf of the ignorance of the feller; or worse than either, by taking hold of another's necessity, and because he must fell, therefore forgetting what charity and compassion would easily dictate in such a case, and giving him perhaps not half the worth of the goods you take from him. And then in selling, enquire again whether you have not knowingly over-rated your goods? or concealed artfully some defect or blemish you knew to be in them, parting with them at a price they had been only worth had they been found; or raising upon an ignorant purchaser what you had been obliged to abate to a crafty one; or if one wanting your goods must have them, therefore being sure ' to make him pay for them,' as we fay. It were endless to mention all the tricking and dishonest practices that may have been used in felling; one however must not be omitted, because generally complained of, whether upon just grounds I neither know nor do allow myself to think, the persons concerned in selling must look to it. It is this, the not having weights and meafures at all times statuteable and equal. It is the seller's business in conscience to see carefully and constantly that they are fo; which if he does not do, he cannot possibly be excused by an ignorance (supposing him ignorant) easily avoidable, and therefore wilful: but the truth generally is, there is real covetousness, and in consequence thereof knavery in the disposi-D B 3 tion,

tion, and the ignorance is, to beguile conscience, merely affec-

ted and pretended.

As we must be dishonest in buying and felling, so also in borrowing and lending. If a man borrows without defign of paying, the whole world pronounces him a cheat. But doth it do fo, if he borrow when he has no prospect of paying? And yet at bottom this is little better than the other; he would not choose to be so dealt with himself; and for any thinghe can forefee he is as likely to deceive his neighbour and disappoint him of the thing lent, as if he had no defign to repay it. what should he have done? he will fay. He was in necessity. Then he should have begged, not borrowed, and in so doing he would have acted honestly. On the other part, a lender may be as dishonest as a borrower; he may exact unreasonable profit for what he lends, whether money or other things; or he may injure or destroy what is put in his hands as a security, whether estate, house or lesser things; or may oppresfively detain to his own use what is so deposited, not caring to part with it again, though all proper fatisfaction is already made, or is offered to be made.

Also in hiring and labouring for hire we may be dishonest. God does not allow those who hire to drive unreasonable bargains with labourers, beneath what their work is worth; nor to delay paying them; nor to detain any part of what was their due; nor to force a profit out of them at second hand, by obliging them contrary to their inclinations to take in goods what is owing to them in money, and so artfully and cruelly fourezing out of them a fixth, it may be a fifth part of their wages. - No more must they who are hired defraud those who hire them, which they may do by more ways than any one can tell but themselves. They defraud their master when they are idle and flothful, squandering the time for which they are paid; and fo they do, when they are careless, and do not their work to their best skill and ability; and so also when they spoil and consume what is given them to work with; and so finally, when they take any part of it to their own use, or give it to

others without their masters knowledge.

I have dwelt, you find, upon fuch things as do not pass for great matters in the eye of the world, but are coloured with some shew of pretence for them, or do not come within the lash of the Law, or by custom are accounted no great scandal,

and fuch as may comport with the character of an honest man. Waving therefore to insist, that plain thest, violent robbery, insolent oppression of such as have no helper, are acts of dishonesty: I only add farther upon this head, that we may steal from many as well as from one; and therefore that it is just as much thest to cheat the country, as it is to defraud a particular man; so that all withholding of custom and tribute, and all buying or selling uncustomed goods, falls under the prohibition of this law. The ground of such practices is covet-

ousness, the practices themselves theft.

And now, to end this head, if any be found to have defrauded another, or to have in his hand any thing which he knows belongs to his neighbour, whether he is the original defrauder or not, he is required by this commandment to restore it. It is as much dishonesty and injustice to keep what is another's, as to take it from him. He must make restitution. Nay, he must not delay to do it; for should he restore it at last, he is actually defrauding his neighbour of the use and benefit of it every day he keeps it. But perhaps the fraud has been fuch, that he cannot know whom he has injured, or those are dead to whom the right belongs: and therefore how can he make restitution? Why, he may not keep that which is not his own at any rate. Is the person dead to whom it is due? Let his representatives have it: for it is theirs. Does not a man know to whom he has been injurious? Then it falls of right to the poor; and these we have always with us.—And thus much of injustice.

The fecond fin forbidden is niggardlinefs. This is the contrary to liberality, and is that fad and finful state of foul, when a man has neither an heart to use nor to give, and so robs himfelf and the needy. There is not a vice in the world more cried out upon; and yet, if we may believe Solomon, there is none more common. There is an evil, which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men: a man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof\*. Well, but however common, what niggardly man ever owned that he was so? It is a sin, it seems, that hides itself from our eyes, and

never wants the false, but fair shew of prudence to cloke itself under. So that peradventure it may be your fin or mine, while we fuspect nothing of the matter; we may be penuriously robbing ourselves and others, and at the same time be admiring at the close-fistedness of this person and that. We shall all therefore do well to look at home; and I suppose we may find some degree or other of it cleaving to us. Sure I am, he only is in any fort fafe from its dominion over him, who fees and contends against it. The marks of it may be such as thefe.

First, Much anxiety and carefulness about increasing in wealth, fo that the thoughts are all intent upon it, with a certain eagerness of growing up to more than one has yet attained to.

Secondly, Importunate folicitude about the fuccess of worldly schemes, fo that they follow us all the day, we only forget them as we fall alleep, and they present themselves to us the very moment we awake.

Thirdly, An over-joyfulness of heart, when our schemes prosper, and we find things answering our expectations .--

Along with thefe,

Fourthly, A fecret uncomfortable discontent of spirit, when we meet with disappointment, and our designs do not succeed.

And Fifthly, When it cheers our hearts to receive, but our countenances fall if we are to pay. This is a fure mark of a niggard. And so is,

Sixthly, An over-carefulness about faving, perpetual plotting and contriving to pinch a little from this and a little from that, and when it goes to a man's heart to think how much is going And most of all,

Seventhly, When we have forgotten that the use of money is to live comfortably ourselves, and to distribute largely to others. I fay, when we have forgotten the use of money; for covetousness shall so blind a man, that he shall never once re-

flect why money was given him.

And Eighthly, When whatever a man gives, his heart draws back from doing it. When he gives for very shame, to save his character, and would never think of giving at all could he handsomely avoid it; and being engaged in a charitable undertaking, he presently repents, and is seeking a pretence to disengage himself from it. - By such marks as these we may dis-

cover

cover niggardliness. But you will fay, if you are of such a stamp

as this, you are encouraging extravagance. No:

Thirdly, Wastefulness is a fin also forbidden by this Commandment. I am well aware that the prodigal person upon hearing the character of the niggard will be ready to boaft, and to declare that he hates a niggard from the bottom of his foul. Well, but he considers not, that he also is a thief .--Wastefulness is theft as well as niggardliness. Thus,

First, He that will waste his substance in eating and drinking, live above his ability, and spend with those that are better able than he, is but a thief; he robs his family, and brings poverty on himself. Such an one may be esteemed by his companions, and reckoned the most honest and best-natured man in the world: but fure I am, in God's reckoning he has a very ill character, he is a thief, he steals from his own, yea from his own house what they at home should live upon, and is worse than an infidel.

So, Secondly, They who lay out all their substance on their back, dress beyond what they can afford, and will needs make a fine appearance whatever it cost them, are miserable thieves; they rob the poor, leave them naked and starving that themfelves may appear to be something. Nay, they rob themselves; and fo bring on penury and want where God fends none. It is eafy to fee this prodigal humour will more effectually reduce any one, than a thief could do by picking the pocket; that might be but once or feldom, but this is a perpetual drain.

So, Thirdly, Gamesters are but thieves, whether they lose or win. Does he lose? He steals from himself and family. But he gains perhaps? Why, then he only robs another and his family. But will it be faid he gained it fairly? No fuch matter. It was coveting that which was another man's that fet him to game; and there is one robbery, namely, in the heart. And then he took an unlawful means of getting, for God has appointed no fuch kind of traffic; and to take from

another without God's warrant cannot be honest.

And, Fourthly, He that prodigally wastes his substance in pleasures, does but rob himself, his family, and the poor.— And there are many fuch wasters now-a-days, who think nothing too much to fpend on their pleasures, and will put every thing to stake, so their inclinations this way may be indulged. No wonder therefore if that be now feen true, which was fo in Solomon's time, 'He that loveth pleasure, shall be a poor 'man.'\* If a man will be continually robbing his own pocket,

no wonder if at last he find nothing there.

Also, Lastly, Idleness is a sinful waster, that preys upon a man's substance till he has nothing left. 'An idle soul shall fuffer hunger, and drowsiness shall be clothed with rags.'t Idleness is a companion that is the worst of thieves. Whatever a man has, it strips him bare, and fills his house with distress and calamity. 'Poverty comes upon a sluggard like an armed man:'t it arrests, and turns him out of house and home. Should a neighbour do that which idleness doth, you would challenge him for a notorious thief and robber. But I cannot stay to enlarge.

You may fee now, how little reason many who cry out upon niggardliness have really to do so, since themselves are guilty another way of breaking the same Commandment.— And you cannot but observe, how both the one and the other of these, niggardliness and wastefulness, are grievous temptations to dishonesty, the former by imagining necessity, the latter by begetting it. And thus much of the eighth Command-

ment.

<sup>\*</sup> Prov. xxi. 17. † Prov. xix. 15,-xxiii. 21. † Prov. vi. 9. 11.

## SERMON XLIV.

#### GALATIANS iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

WHILE I go forward explaining the commandments, it is possible one and another may be ready to complain of the Law as too strict, or of me as explaining it beyond its real meaning. For the latter complaint, I refer to Christ's own explanation of the Law in his Sermon on the mount: but the former has its foundation in ignorance of the design of the Law; which is to make us know our fins, and thereby the misery of our state; with this gracious purpose, that we may come to Christ for deliverance from our guilt and the punishment we deserve; and so may without fear serve God and keep his commandments sincerely, while daily experience shews us we cannot do it perfectly. We must learn therefore to make a right use of the Law.

First, To understand it in its full extent.

Secondly, To apply it to our hearts and ways for the disco-

very of what we are and have done; and then,

Thirdly, To fue for mercy for Christ's sake, because of our transgressions against it, and to set ourselves chearfully to walk according to it by the grace of God as nearly as we can. With these purposes let us hear now what the ninth commandment has against us. 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.'

In order to fix the true design of this commandment, it must beobs erved, that salse witnessing in the highest sense is upon path, when appeal is made to God for the truth of what we

declare.

declare. Now in such false witnessing, there are always three commandments expressly broken; the third commandment by calling God to witness what is false, and therein lies the perjury of false witness; then, secondly, a monstrous injury offered to our neighbour's life or estate, in breach of the sixth or eighth commandment, as the case is, in capital cases of both; and then, thirdly, a wrong done to our brother's character, which is properly the sin against this ninth commandment. From hence it appears, that although false witnessing upon oath doth indeed fall under this commandment, yet it only doth so as far as our neighbour's character is concerned therein; God's honour and man's life or property having been before secured and provided for. And so the purpose of the ninth commandment is evidently this, to preserve the character of our neighbour. And it has two branches.

First, That as far as we can we must preserve a good opi-

nion of our neighbour in our own hearts.

Secondly, That according to our power we must maintain his

character in the world.

Firsh, As far as we can we must preserve a good opinion of our neighbour in our hearts. And therefore these three things sall evidently under the censure of this commandment. 1. A censorious disposition. 2. Rash judging. 3. And a willingness to hear of the faults of others. Which three are so connected together, that there is no dividing them. A censorious temper unavoidably begets hard judging and pleasure in hearing the faults of others; while these plainly prove a censorious disposition, which is most absolutely contrary to the main purpose of this commandment, in the sight of God a constant breach of it, and the cause of almost every transgression that can be committed against it. Wherefore I set in the front of sins against the ninth commandment,

First, A censorious disposition. And this is such a temper of heart as disposes us to believe badly of others, fills us with suspicions of every one we deal with, and keeps us upon the watch to pick up all the ill impressions we can to the disadvantage of others. Nothing in the whole world shews an uncharitable, unchristian, unhumbled devilish spirit, to be in man, so much as this. It is worse then revenge, where passion pleads; it is worse than envy, where interest or reputation urge, to bear an unloving heart towards others: it is a

cool

cool deliberate wishing evil to others, and rejoicing in it, without any provocation but the deep malignity of a proud heart. What can be so devilish as to love to see sin in others, and to rejoice in the least appearance of it? Beyond all the evil tempers you can think of, and all the horrid actions you can devife, it argues the foul dead in trespasses and fins; wrapt up in its own pride, it looks about with content on a world lying in wickedness, and feeds itself with delight and complacency upon the growing testimony of man's sinfulness; till at length it comes to a conclusion that none are to be trusted, and that there are no fuch things as grace and integrity in the world. But, you fay, is there any fuch thing as this cenforious difpofition among men? Alas, we all brought it into the world with us; and if there has not been a divine change wrought upon our fouls fince that time, we are now under the dominion of it. And the very best will not think themselves free from it. Whence is it but from this, that the faults and infirmities of others make fo confiderable a part of conversation; that our ears if not our mouths are open in the tale of others vices; that while fome are hearing with a finful indifference, others are eagerly contending as for victory, to fix the crime, and fet it out in an unfavourable light? This we have all known, I fear do still know more or less, to be our conduct; which nevertheless can arise from nothing but this very censorious temper. But we shall see more of it in speaking to the two other things, rash judging, and readiness to hear evil of others.

Secondly, Rash judging is a fin against this commandment. Judge not, says our Lord, that ye be not judged.\* The reason and argument alledged shews the nature of the judgment forbidden; as ye expect God not to judge you in severity, so be not you severe judges of the conduct of others. And herein lies a mighty argument for judging the most savourably we can of others: for if God, who knows perfectly what poor sinners and imperfect servants of his we are, will yet deal favourably for his Son's sake in judging us; much more should we, who are under the same condemnation before God, form the most savourable judgments we can one of another, seeing we do not so well know the hearts one of another. Judge not, that ye be not judged. But you will say, how can I help judging that which

lies plainly before me? True, you cannot. And many times it is your duty to judge: for if you do not judge fin to be fin, and a finful man to be a finful man, you cannot reprove the one or avoid the other. Charity does not oblige you to put out your eyes, and to call evil good. But it forbids you to condemn any in your own mind upon an infufficient warrant, and requires that you should hope all things that can possibly be hoped concerning your brother. Thus, though you cannot but determine in your heart that those who live in open sin, such as drunkenness, profaneness, idleness, covetousness, and the like, are without the grace of God in their hearts: yet if the wickedness be hid, and there be the appearances of godliness, we are to hope the best, nor to be beat out of this hope by one thing or another which we cannot fo well reconcile and account for. And then as to particular actions, to put always the most candid interpretation upon them, not to ascribe that to malice, revenge, pride, covetousness, which may be called by a gentler name, and arife from a lefs blameable principle, if not a good one. Farther than this; not to determine any one's whole character to be naught because of a particular action confessedly indeed bad, but still to hope it was through force of surprise, and that all nevertheless may be well at bottom, enters into the heart of charitable judging. The fum is, ' fecret things belong to 6 God,' who will not have us measure beyond our line, and rather to think well of those who may be bad, than to be ready to think ill of those who may be otherwise, because of some appearances to the contrary. But a censorious spirit will set us on judging contrary to all these measures. The Pharifees were sure to take by the worst handle every thing Christ did. When he cast out devils, they will needs have it he is a conjurer and in league with Beelzebub. When he takes friendly notice of the most abandoned to do them good, presently he is no other than a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and finners.' They first invented an evil action where there was none, and then condemned him for it as the vilest of sinners. Pharisees were hard censurers, nothing could escape them.-Could you have feen the heart of one of them, you would have found there a tribunal fet up purely for condemnation, a purpose to condemn all, an eagerness to discover the least flaw, a cruel decision of every thing in the most unfavourable manner, and an evident exultation of spirit in the supposed discovery. It

It would be well indeed, if there had been nothing of their fpirit in us. But alas, how often have we judged rashly, condemned upon false grounds, not put the most favourable interpretations, and come to hasty and uncharitable conclusions upon the state or conduct of our neighbours! and hereby proved that we are not such strangers to the censorious disposition above spoken of, as we may have been apt to imagine.

Thirdly, A willingness to hear of the faults of others, is another effect of a censorious disposition, and sin against this Commandment. This is fo plain that I need not fay much upon it, yet so common I fear that it must not be past by. The question then is this, how are you affected, and how do you behave, when you hear of other peoples faults? If you be charitably disposed as you ought, you will be really grieved for the person accused, if the thing be so clear that you cannot gainfay it; and if you think he is hardly judged and misreprefented, you will not fail to defend him. But if you are well enough pleafed to hear fuch things faid of another, and better pleased when you find they are true; if supposing you think him feverely dealt with, you yet fit still, and let the matter pass as if no concern of yours, will you imagine that you have a real love for your neighbour, and concern to maintain his reputation in the world? Or will not this argue very much of that cenforious spirit to be dwelling in your heart? Yet have you never heard too patiently, or too filently, or too pleafingly, the faults of others? To talk of other peoples blemishes is the general talk of some, and they are the subject of a great part of their conversation. I befeech you how could this be unless we were pleased with it, and but too forward to hear it? Otherwise conversation of that kind would soon be discountenanced and difmiffed, and the tale-bearer and flanderer be constrained to keep in the venom of his malicious heart, which now, too much at liberty, he pours out to the poisoning of the hearts of others. Revenge and envy, as was hinted above, are a kind of alleviations and comparative excuses for being content to hear of the defects of those, who we think have done us ill, or stand in our way; and therefore the most dreadful mark of a censorious spirit must lie in this, that we are pleased and forward to hear of the faults of those to whom it may be we are strangers, or between whom and us there have been no jealousies. To be willing to hear of the faults of another through

revenge or envy is bad enough; but to fit down in cold blood as it were, and for very malice fake to be pleafed in hearing a history of their vices or infirmities, against whom we bear no resentment, and are perhaps little or nothing acquainted with, this is to rejoice indeed in iniquity, bespeaks a censorious disposition in the very height of it, and is in truth a consideration that should alarm us all.—This will suffice for the first head, and evidently shew kow far a censorious disposition, hard judging of others, and a willingness to hear their faults, is from preserving as good an opinion as we can of our neighbour in our own hearts.

Secondly, The other duty required by this Commandment is, that according to our power we do maintain his character in the world. And so these three other things fall also under the cenfure of this Commandment.

First, Going about to lessen the real attainments of our neigh-

bour, which is detraction.

Secondly, Laying a charge against him that does not belong to him, which is slander.

And, Thirdly, Discovering his real faults needlessly, which

is evil-speaking.

I would not you should lose fight of censoriousness, as lying at the bottom of the greater part of detraction, slander and evil-speaking. I say the greater part of it; although envy and revenge will also have their share. But then their province is more confined, reaching only to particular persons, and even in regard of their characters nothing to hurtful as centoriousnefs, because these tempers generally make themselves known by the bitterness or violence wherewith they express themselves; and fo by overdoing carry with them an antidote against what is faid, and make the envious or angry person heard with allowance, and with little heed taken of what he speaks. Whereas the cenforious tongue goes through the world, and spares none; while in the mean time putting on the guise of impartiality or the shew of compassion, characters fall before it with an influence very hardly to be refifted, infomuch that it will be exceedingly difficult for the most charitable heart to go away without some lessening impression of the persons spoken of .-So much peculiar mischief arises from a kind of conversation, which is often thought to have no great harm in it. But to come to the particulars, which I shall in a manner but barely mention, as the nature of their sinfulness has been already shewn. Firft.

revenge

First, Detraction is a going about to lessen the character of others. It is a doing that by our neighbour which the spies did by the promised land, bringing up such an evil report upon him, and fetting him in fuch colours, as to make him little regarded. It were endless to mention the various methods that may be used for this purpose, such as marking out his defects in that very grace or gift wherein he excelleth, or lowering him by the mention of his weak fide, or hiding his defervings by fetting forth the more eminent character of others, or rendering him despicable by some accidental circumstance belonging to him; as the Jews faid of Christ, Is not this the carpenter's Son? I fay the methods of detraction are endless. The thing itself is evident, that when we say any thing to the hurt or hindrance of our neighbour's character, whereby he may be rendered less ferviceable to Christ and the world, we actually fin against God and others, as well as him. And therefore it will behave us to reflect whether we have not carelefsly or wilfully leffened the real attainments of others, in grace, virtue and prudence, by speaking slightingly of them; and behaving as if they were of little account. A little done this way may have produced much mischief, and so involved us in great guilt.

Secondly, Another way of hurting our neighbour's character is by Slander; that is, by bringing a charge against him that does not belong to him. Now these slanders are either false reports invented and uttered about another, or fuch reports added to, or carried about by those that heard them. In the case of raising false reports the thing is plain, and the sin manifest. But where is the difference between raising a report, and adding to it what it had not before, to make it more considerable? But you will say perhaps, you did not mean to make it worse than you heard it, it was your mistake. However you see an injury is done to your neighbour, and at whose door does the blame lie but yours? Yea, and had you reported no more than you heard, to what end did you report a story to the hurt of your neighbour's character? Can you lay your hand on your heart and fay, in the presence of God, I had no other defign in doing it but God's glory, and out of fome charitable purpose?' If not, you acted the part of a tale-bearer, and you very well know that is a character far from being commended in scripture. If it was not through No. 6.

revenge or envy you uttered the flanderous flory that lay burning in your bosom, till it was imparted to all your acquaintance, you must have done it out of pure censoriousness, and

in the want of charity, which was vastly worse.

Thirdly, The other fin against the public maintenance of our neighbour's character, is Evil-speaking, by which I would understand here, speaking needlessly of the faults of others. We must speak of the sins of others, when there is necessity; but when there is none, and no real good intended calls us to it, then though the thing be true, we commit a fin in telling it. If the glory of God and the good of others require, we must indeed speak the truth. But when we have no such design, and there is no manner of occasion, by speaking the truth we do but injure our own fouls. Yet perhaps people will be ready to think they have done nothing amifs, because they have faid nothing but what was true to their own knowledge. But is this doing as you would be done by? Did your neighbour know any thing amiss of you, would you be willing he should, without any reason, but to indulge his foolish heart and tongue, make it known, and ruin your character in the world? If not, the mere faying that what you have spoken is but the truth, can be but a poor excuse.

And now from the whole of this account of the ninth Commandment, you may fee what an enemy your tongue is to your foul, and what a perverse nature there is within you to set on fire your tongue. I will leave these two hints with you for the

better ordering the one and the other.

First, Above all things in the world pray for a new heart. The chief transgressions of this Commandment are within: and you know also it is out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. As faith, hope, and charity gain strength, the censorious principle will die in you as well as envy and revenge, and so you will be more from receiving or uttering any thing to the prejudice of your brother's good name.

Secondly, Injoin this upon yourfelf, never to fpeak of the faults of others, unless absolutely obliged to it. You will find this rule of prudence to be of great service, not only to the bridling of your tongue, but to the mortifying of your heart.

There are many other fins usually ranged under this Commandment, such as stattery, boasting, and the like: but I have chosen rather to confine myself to the simple design of it, ref-

specting.

pecting the characters of others; especially as all these have been in substance spoken to under some of the former. The tenth Commandment remains now only to be treated of, which, God willing, shall be our employment when we next meet.

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## SERMON XLV.

#### GALATIANS iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

HE tenth and last commandment is our present subject.

'Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.' For settling the true sense of which words,

it will be needful to remark,

First. That in the nine former commandments there has been direction given for every inward and outward act of duty owing to God or man, and all the finful conduct contrary thereto has been prohibited and condemned. In the commandments of the first table, all those dispositions of mind towards God which are called godliness, as love, fear, trust, and every outward expression of them to God's honour, are injoined.— And in the five first commandments of the second table, all relative duties in our special calling, as well as a right temper and conduct to our neighbour, respecting his life, chastity, goods, and name, have been particularly required of usthat if the tenth commandment be, as no doubt it is, a law distinct from every one of the rest, as are the others; and has a meaning proper to itself, as to be fure it must, then its defign cannot be to prohibit any particular fin whether against God or man. Especially as to the fin of covetousness, to which the word covet feems at first fight to direct; it is to be observed that the fin of covetousness, that is, discontented carking carefulness, is already prohibited by the eighth commandment, and therefore cannot be intended here; and coveting our neighbour's wife, which is here distinctly expressed, cannot in any

fense fall under the notion of such covetousness. And we must observe besides,

Secondly, That the defign of the whole law being evidently to make fin fully known, that defign would not be answered by it, if there had not been a particular commandment in it which should condemn those sinful defires of our nature, which are the principles of all finful acts whatever. For if all finful habits in the mind and all finful actions without had been condemned, and yet the fource of them all in the natural defires of our depraved nature been passed by without mention, the great fin of all, and the one fource of all, had remained undiscovered and uncondemned, and the defign of the law, to bring us to Christ for deliverance from the guilt and power of all fin, by discovering it to us, and shewing us the curse threatened against us for it, had not been answered. Accordingly in the seventh chapter to the Romans, St Paul does most plainly interpret this tenth commandment, as condemning the natural defires of our depraved hearts. This depraved defire of his heart he speaks directly of from the seventh verse to the end of that chaper, stiles it fin by way of eminence, sin that dwells in him, and the law of fin in his members; and by these descriptions makes it plain enough what he means by it. Yet this fin, this law of his members, he tells us, verse the seventh, he had not known, that is, he had not known it to have been in him, or not known it to have been finful, and that there was guilt chargeable upon him for it, but for the tenth commandment, which he fays made all this plain to him: I had not known luft, (or as it is in the margin, concupifcence) except the law had faid, Thou shalt not covet; the corrupt defires, longings or lustings of his heart, as different from finful habits of the mind or actions of the body, he had not known to be fin, unless the tenth commandment had said, Thou shalt not covet. So we need go no farther for the meaning of the word covet, nor for the defign of this commandment; which manifestly appears to be this, to restrain, by condemning them, all irregular defires after any thing that is our neighbour's; that is, (after any thing forbidden in the fecond table) before they are formed into determined purpoles and projects of accomplishment.

And lest it should be wondered that no other desires are here mentioned than those which refer to the second table, the reason is, that all the sinful desires of our nature are only after the things prohibited in the second table. The sin of our nature against the first table is to have no desire after God; and therefore there being in our nature no desire after God, that desire only that is in our nature can be condemned; namely, desire after earthly and sensual things, both which are expressly mentioned in this commandment, coveting our neighbour's house, being an earthly desire, and coveting his wife a

Sensual one.

But yet that all defires after the things and enjoyments of this present time might not seem to be disallowed and sinful; the commandment also gives us to understand how we shall make a distinction between those desires after present things, which fpring from our corrupted nature, and are in themfelves finful, and fuch as are innocent, and indeed in our prefent circumstances necessary. Thou shalt not defire any thing that is thy neighbour's; for to defire what is another's for thy convenience or gratification, issues directly from the carnality and wordliness of thy nature, and plainly proves an inclination for present things, which is neither consistent with love to God or man. It cannot be properly faid that fuch a defire after present things is inordinate, as if the whole fault in it were that it is excessive: it is finful from the foundation, rifing from the corrupt principle within us, and betraying the carnal earthly nature. It is one thing to desire the things of this world for necessity; if the foul of an angel were dwelling in your body or mine, instead of that soul now dwelling in it, he could not do otherwise; but it is quite another thing to defire the things of this world for indulgence of pride or lust; this is fenfual and earthly. I faid just now that a difference is to be made between these desires, and such as are inordinate. To defire carnally what is another man's, is finful in itself, as it arises from an earthly or sensual principle; to defire upon necessity is lawful; but it is not so to desire necessary things inordinately; for when necessary things are defired beyond the measure of God's word and providence, and with impatience and anxiety, then though the defire in itself be not bad, yet the manner of defiring has fin in it. The whole I have been faying may be made plain and illustrated this way: The commandment fays, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house. Now suppose I have an house which is suited to my convenience, but because my neighbour's is more magnificent, I defire to have

have his, such defire arises plainly from pride and is altogether finful. But suppose I have no house at all, or that which I live in is not fuited to my convenience, may I not defire my neighbour's? Yes, fo it be ordinately; that is, without defiring it to his hurt, and endeavouring to procure it only in honest ways: otherwise my desire of his house, though lawful in itself. becomes finful and inordinate. Ahab would have Naboth's vineyard: Now grant it would have been convenient for him, yet he defired it inordinately, he must have it right or wrong, and fince there was but one way to it, innocent Naboth shall rather be iniquitously put to death as a traitor, and so the vineyard come to the king by forfeiture, than he will go without it.

One farther thing should also be observed, that as it is difficult for us to defire necessary things ordinately, so also that defires in themselves finful will be apt to mix with those that arise from necessity. Ahab, we will say, wanted Naboth's vineyard for a garden of herbs; but had there not been some defire of pomp or pleasure accompanying it, he could not be in fuch want of a garden of herbs, as to take Naboth's refufal

fo much to heart as he did.

Nay and many times the really finful defire will be clothing itself under the guise of necessity, and pretend necessity where there is really none. Can we suppose king Ahab was in real want of a garden of herbs; Is it not more probable that some scheme of indulgence or pomp made him conceive he wanted Naboth's vineyard; and that for any matter of necessity in the thing he could as well have done without it?

But you will fay Ahab was a king, and many things are neceffary to the state of a king that are not so to others. This is true. But pride and indulgence are just as much finful principles in the great as in others. And necessity in their station is just no other than necessity in any other station. So that their station shall never justify defires either sinful in them-

felves, or finful in the inordinacy of them.

To collect now all that has been faid, we fee there are two kinds of defires, one of real necessity, which are not finful unless inordinate; and the other issuing from corrupt nature, and always finful. The fin of inordinate defire after necessary things falls under the feventh and eighth commandments; the business of the seventh commandment being to regulate our

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bodily desires, as that of the eighth is to direct our desires in respect of worldly possessions. So that the precise sense of the tenth commandment is now fixed down, according to the interpretation St. Paul has given of it, to such covetings or desires as are in themselves sinsul, and therefore charge us with guilt, although they be not formed into determined purposes

of accomplishment, nor brought into outward act.

Should I attempt to enumerate all those various lustings and defires, that pass through our hearts without being permitted to make a fettlement there, and yet are forbidden by this commandment, the undertaking would be endless. Yet it will be needful to give some fort of account of them. And the commandment itself must be the rule for me to go by. It says, Thou shalt not covet any thing that is thy neighbour's. Now to follow the order of the foregoing commandments of the second table, to which it was shewn above this concupiscence could have only respect immediately; I say my neighbour's dignity is his, his foul and body are his, his wife is his, his goods are his, his good name is his; and the covetings or luftings of our hearts after any of these things which are his, are here forbidden.— A short word upon each of these will be sufficient; and the whole together will, I think, take in the whole scope of the law of fin, which is in our members, in all its hidden, fecret, and most abominable workings.

First, Thou shalt not covet, or have any sinful desires in thy heart, after thy neighbour's dignity. And here all those sudden rifings of heart against the authority of God in the persons of those he has set over us, come in and are condemned. We have been from our youth up, and still are in one degree or other in a state of subjection; and if all stubborn, impatient, felf-willed, angry fuggestions of the heart, against our governors, are so many covetings of his dignity, and therefore fins against this tenth Commandment; and that they are really covetings of his dignity who does not fee, when they are but faying in our hearts, Ah that I were but in his place? I say, if all these stubborn risings of corrupt nature against our superiors be trespasses against the tenth Commandment, and we have been all in subjection to various superiors, to parents, schoolmasters and mistresses, other masters, hufbands, ministers, magistrates, those that are more aged, more

honourable,

honourable, more qualified than we; who can count the num-

ber of his fins in this one point only?

Secondly, Thou shalt not lust after thy neighbour's life, thou must not have a motion to his hurt in foul or body within thy heart. All envious, revengeful, unmerciful suggestions against him are contrary to charity, and rife out of a deprayed nature. Nay you fay, But suppose I have not yielded to them? That alters not the case. God is in this commandment condemning your finful nature, and charging you with guilt because of all and every of those lustings that have at any time been in your heart against your brother's spiritual or temporal welfare. When anger rose in your breast because of some injury you thought to have been done you; or displeasure because of his eminence beyond you in wealth, or grace, or abilities; or jealoufy, because he seemed coming too near you; or secret fatisfaction, when you heard the news of his miscarriage in duty, misfortune in bufinefs, his ficknefs or death, as one standing in your way: when any of these accursed lustings wrought in your heart, there was fin. And if you are not a perfect stranger to your own heart, and so of course not well acquainted with the glorious and necessary falvation of Jesus Christ, you are very sure that such horrid instances of corruption have been in you, while you tremble at the very remembrance of them.

Thirdly, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife. it is difficult to speak of this subject before any who have indulged imaginations of this fort without raising them; yes, even though the fubject should be touched with the utmost degree of tenderness and caution, and in such manner as to be no kind of temptation to a chafte mind. I therefore do but mention that point; and pass on to observe, that all manner of fenfuality being also condemned by the feventh commandment, all motions towards it fall under the cenfure of the tenth.— God will be the portion and joy of his people; but our deprave dhearts have found out another portion in sensual gratifications. And who has not found the heart rifing up to meet indulgence with joy? Why did our apostle take so much pains to hold his bodily appetites in subjection, but that he found the cravings of them so importunate? It is the body that is the great fnare to the foul; and who can fay how many thousand times

his foul has given entertainment to the finful defires of it, while the very refreshments of nature, our meat, drink, and sleep,

afford it fuch constant opportunities?

But Fourthly, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods. What I now speak of is not the fin of coverousness; that is, anxious desiring from a discontentedness with what I have already, nor that determining and devising of theft before it is committed; but that which is at the bottom of both, the finful stirrings of corrupt nature after the interests of the world, in which our foolish hearts do naturally trust. Thou shalt not lust after thy neighbour's goods; that is, every fecret wish thou hast found in thy heart that any part of another's sub-. stance, his house, estate, wealth, were thine, that thou mightest be more safe and secure in the world; that is to say, more out of the reach of God's providence and of all dependence upon him, was a fin. Search therefore the records of your confcience. You have not wished to have your neighbour's goods by fraud or force, I allow: but have you never wished any of them yours, from the instigation of a world-trusting heart? We have as to the expression only lightly said perhaps, If I had but fo much of fuch an one's fortune, but have in our hearts more seriously wished it than we imagine. What are all those fearful careful thoughts about worldly wealth, but so many lustings, not of moderate desire after what is necessary, but of a finful defire to be as great a man as my neighbour? And that amounts to the same thing as wishing he and I might change places. And is then every anxious worldly defire a finful coveting your neighbour's goods? I pray you then, fee what a nest of them your heart has been. Has it not been fo? What, no anxious defires or fears, which like guests of a day have tarried with you awhile at least, though they could not fix upon you habits of covetousness, nor prevail with you to design any schemes of dishonesty? Surely, whosoever you are, your worldly heart has brought infinite guilt upon you. Yet once more:

Fifthly, Thou shalt not lust after thy neighbour's good name. The meaning of this is, thou mayest never have in thy heart one suggestion of envy, because thy neighbour is better than thou; of hatred because his virtues reprove thy vices; of displeasure because he will follow his conscience some than thy will; of delight no not in the least degree in hearing

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of or beholding his fins; this is defiring hurt to thy neighbour's name: yea, though thou dost not approve any of these suggestions, but art really displeased with them, and wouldst never more know them, yet they are thy sins. But have we never known any of these devilish suggestions in us, never any risings of envy against any who seemed better christians than ourselves, never any stirrings of dislike against others because their conduct reproved ours and made us uneasy, no workings of displeasure because our brother would do what seemed to him right, no sudden chillings of heart when we have heard others praised, no malignant satisfaction when they have been evil spoken of? Truly I would not venture to charge any living man with the least of these things, were it not that I know they are natural to us all, and among the most fearful proofs of our fallen state.

What has been said may fuffice to shew the defign of this last commandment, and therein the sad sinfulness of our nature.

That we have all experienced the fecret workings of the corrupt principle in us in the manner described, I take for granted; for, As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man\*. But whether we have reckoned these motions and defires that we have found in our hearts to be finful, is a queftion. St Paul was a great and learned man; yet till this commandment was laid open to him in its deep meaning, he tells us himself he either did not know concupiscence, or did not know the finfulness of it, and the guilt it brought him under. It will be our business therefore to be very close with our hearts, and to fearch out this root of bitterness, which if it had not been in us, there had been no need of an express commandment against it. And we shall be acting a very foolish part, if when we hear God condemning it, we ourselves make little account of it: Rather we should be thankful that it has pleafed God to make the finfulness of it known to us by levelling the curse against it; and so, humbling ourselves on the fight of our apostacy, betake ourselves to him who was made fin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, even Jesus Christ our Saviour, to whom, &c.

<sup>\*</sup> Prov. xxvii. 19.

## SERMON XLVI.

#### GALATIANS iii. 24.

Wherefore the law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

A FTER having completed the explanation of the whole Law, contained in the ten Commandments; yet once more I take up the fame subject, in order to lay out before you more fully than I have yet done the use of the Law.

Now the very giving out of the Law shews the use we must make of it. The giving out of the Law plainly implies these

feveral things.

First, That sin is in the world. A revealed moral law is perfectly needless to reasonable creatures in a state of perfection, seeing they have the whole knowledge and practise of all duty in their very nature. To what purpose should God say to the holy angels, 'Ye shall love the Lord with all your mind and strength, and one another as yourselves,' when already they perfectly know and perfectly do this, and there is not the least inclination in them to do any thing else? Accordingly, when our first parents were in their state of innocency, there was no moral Law charged upon them, though they were God's subjects; for they had both the knowledge and practice thereof in themselves. There was no more need to bid Adam love God, than there is to bid you or me love ourselves.

Secondly, The giving out of the Law not only supposes that fin is in the world, but also that sin is not known to be sin.—This is universally true. Sin is not known, till some law shews it, seeing sin is the transgression of a law. The depraved nature of man is ever ready to call evil good, to pass by that as nothing which is most provoking and dishonourable to God, and especially to hide its own malignant wickedness un-

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der the smoothing titles of human frailty and impersection.—
To this day no man knows sin to be sin till the Law shews it him: and if after many ages God saw sit to collect, into two tables the sum of man's duty, and to give it out in a most awful manner, it was but doing that in a more express way, with a special view to the approaching appearance of Christ in the world, which he had before found necessary to do by direct revelations, and the maintenance of his Law upon mens consciences by tradition. Sin doth not appear to be sin without the Law.

Thirdly, The giving out of the Law implies also that the confequences of sin are not regarded. The love of sin in mens hearts, and the prevalency of its practice in the world, make it look like a harmless thing, which may be meddled with without danger. With the ten Commandments in our hands, and the curse against transgression of the least of them in our ears, how easy do we sit down about the fearful consequences of sin in judgment and eternity! And how little then should we have thought of these consequences, had sin been lest in the quiet possession of us, and we never been told by divine autho-

rity that the wages of it is death!

And Fourthly, By the giving out of the Law is evidently implied the purpose of mercy through Jesus Christ. Had there been no design of mercy, there could have been no end answered by giving out a Law, which in that case we could not in any fort keep, when also our misery as sinners was determined before. But when the divine Majesty has a scheme of mercy in hand, which cannot effectually take place, unless our fins be known, and the consequences of them apprehended, to give out the Law by which both sin and its consequence, death, are plainly set forth to view, is to declare in the very doing it the design of mercy, because it is taking the only method that could be taken of bringing us to it.

Yet Fifthly, As the defign of mercy is implied in giving out the Law, so also this farther defign, that they who are brought to partake of this mercy thro' the discovery of their sin and danger by the Law, might find in the very same Law a perfect rule after which to square their hearts and lives. Indeed the main end of all is conformity to the law, to which both the knowledge of sin, and its danger by the Law, and the purpose of mercy in Christ, are subservient; the Law sending us to

Christ

Christ for mercy, that being encouraged and enabled by him we may walk in conformity to God's Commandments, imperfectly here, and holily hereafter.

From these observations, the use we are to make of the Com-

mandments appears to be this.

First, That we learn our guilt and misery by them.

Secondly, That the fense of our guilt and misery by them do bring us unto Christ.

And Thirdly, That being brought unto Christ, we do dili-

gently walk in them.

First, Therefore, as you intend to profit by the Commandments, you must learn your guilt and misery by them. What I mean by your mifery is plainly this, that if you have disobeyed God by breaking any of God's Commandments, there is a curse lying against you for it. For the curse threatened against Adam, In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,'\* lies against you as well as him, not only for his transgression, but every personal one of your own. 'Thou shalt furely die,' a temporal death speedily, and if not prevented by mercy, an eternal death in the world to come. You do not doubt of Adam's misery after his transgression, unless relieved by God's pardoning mercy; and you have no reason to doubt of your own without the same mercy. You see Adam, after eating the forbidden fruit, a poor condemned criminal, trembling before his Judge, and expecting nothing else but the execution of his fentence, without the least hope or remedy in himself. If God had resolved to strike him dead that moment, and put in force against him all the farther terrors implied in that word, 'Thou shalt furely die,' he had nothing to gainfay to it, he could not prevent it. And if you have finned after the fimilitude of Adam's transgression, put forth your hand and done that which God charged you you should not do, why is not your case as remediless as his? Has not God pronounced the fentence of death for it against you as well as him? And what can you do, more than he could, to prevent it? More than he could, can you prevent prefent death? Adam is dead, and fo shall you also soon be. And what power have you, more than had Adam, to prevent death eternal? If therefore you have finned, the fentence of death is gone out against

against you already, which you have no power to reverse in the whole extent of it; no more power to prevent eternal than present death. And that you may know you have transgressed, God has given out his Law. Your business is to prove and try yourself by it. To help you in doing which, the whole of it has been explained; and you have continually found yourfelf guilty, Commandment after Commandment. But to affift you in fixing on your heart the whole extent of your guilt, it may not be amifs to lay all the charge of the Law before you in a few words, and in fuch manner as to help your inquiries after Take therefore a fummary of the ten Commandments; but in an order different from that in which they stand, for the better afcertaining the whole extent of your fins, and the connection which they have one with another.

Let us begin with the fourth Commandment. Have you not been wanting in the public honour you are required to pay to God by a religious observance of the Sabbath-day? If you

Let us pass to the third Commandment. Have you not also been wanting in paying honour to God in the whole of your conduct, by acting in every thing as became your dependence upon him, and his government over you? If here also you are

guilty.

Let us pass to the second Commandment, and ask, if you have put no flight upon his honour in respect of the worship due to him, either by neglecting it, or behaving irreverently in it? Now you cannot but be fensible, that it was your duty publicly to honour God; and that you could do fo no other way than by worshipping him, acting always in such a manner as became your dependence upon him, and folemnly observing that day which he has purposely separated for the maintenance and manifestation of his honour and name in the world. But here you have been wanting. Why? Surely because you had not a right disposition of heart towards God.

This leads to the first Commandment; you had not that belief of God's being and glorious perfections, that reverence of him, that love towards him, that trust in him, which this first Commandment requires, and which, had they been in the entire possession of your heart, would have unavoidably and uninterruptedly caused you to worship him to his honour, to act for his glory, and to bear your testimony to his name by the most religious observance of his day. But what excluded from

your heart these dispositions towards God? It was sin, concupifcence or lust, dwelling in you; which, with all its motions or defires, is condemned by the tenth Commandment. And here the fins of commission have their foundation, and the reason is shewn why you have been without the love of God and man in your heart, and acted fo much to the dishonour of the one and the hindrance of the other, as you have done. The root of all lies in your finful nature, for which, as well as for all and every of its defires and motions, you are charged with guilt by the last Commandment. But besides this, you have actually confented to the evil defires and motions of your finful nature, and more or less they have formed the habits of your foul, and influenced the actions of your life. Infomuch that because your nature is sensual, you have consented to the fenfual defires of it, and put them into practice; for which you are condemned by the feventh Commandment, which injoins upon you temperance, foberness and chastity: because your nature is earthly, you have confented to, and acted upon the worldly motions of it, contrary to the eighth commandment: and finally, because your nature is devilifb, you have consented to and followed the self-willed motions of it, in opposition to the fifth Commandment; its envious, revengeful and cruel motions. in contradiction to the fixth Commandment; and the purely malicious motions thereof in censoriousness, contrary to the ninth Commandment: and all this in full and evident breach of the duty you owe to God and your neighbour. Now fuch an inquiry would not leave any of us free from guilt; nor shall we be able to alledge that in any of these things we have not finned. And it has appeared that we pass over one design of giving out the Law, if we are not brought to find our fins by it. The Law comes out because we are sinners, and to shew us that we are fo, as well as to alarm us with our mifery because of sin. And this work it must do, as we mean to seek for mercy and to obtain it. 'The whole need not the physician; and none are fo dangerously fick, as they that are fo and do not know it. Wherefore let us lay God's Law to our conduct, that we may certainly fee what it has been; and then let us lay the curse of the Law to the transgression of it. thus, by the grace of God, we shall lay the good foundation of making a right use of God's merciful design towards us in giving out the Law. And hereupon,

Secondly, The fense of our guilt and misery through the Law

must bring us unto Christ for mercy. It was shewn above. that the fentence against sin is already gone forth, In the day that thou eateft thereof thou shalt furely die; and it was observed that a part of this fentence is already executed and daily executing in present death. The point is, can we do any thing to prevent the remaining and more fearful part of it, death eternal? If we can, God will be found a liar, who hath declared, . The day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die; and that the wages of fin is death,'\* not only present, but most evidently everlasting, because that everlasting life which it immediately follows in that passage is the gift of God, and is set in opposition to this death. We can do nothing that will prevent eternal death: if you think you can, you will by that very means effectually bring it upon you. The truth is, that the business of the judgment-day will be only to put in execution the fentence of eternal death on all of us who have not fled for refuge to Christ, and to give possession of eternal life to all of us that have: then the truth of that word shall appear, 'He that believeth on the Son, hath everlafting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.'+ If there had been fuch a thing as justification by our own righteousness, there had been no such thing as a Law given out, for there had been no need of it; we should have been a Law unto, and have had the perfection of the Law in ourselves: and therefore no one can have made a right use of the Law, who has not learnt by it the need of a Saviour, and to apply for mercy through that Redeemer who hath come into the world. Such an one has not learnt the first use of the Law, which is to give the knowledge of fin; and must be fent back again to the precept and the curse of the Law to be taught, what he has not yet learnt to purpose, his guilt and misery. Christ is come into the world to fave finners, and we have God's word for it a thousand times over, that he is 'able to ' fave to the uttermost all who come unto God by him:' but then the Law came before Christ, to prepare the way for him, by making known the want of him, and thereby to bring men's hearts into a state to receive him. We never come to Christ till the Law is first come to us; and the Law is never effectually come to us till by it we are brought to Christ; that is, till No. 6.

we are convinced by it of our guilt and mifery, and are looking after mercy in his righteousness Wherefore this is the fecond step in the use of the Law, that we betake ourselves to mercy in Christ, the promise of whom is plainly implied in the explicit giving out of the Law. Hitherto the text evidently reaches. The Law was our Schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ,

that we might be justified by Faith. But then,

Thirdly, When we are come to Christ for deliverance from the curse of the Law, have we no more to do with the Law? Yes verily we have, we must walk in it all the days of our life. And that we shall not, we cannot fail to do, if we be really come to Christ, if our faith in him be true. For if it be true faith it will work by love; love will be the certain infallible fruit of it, love towards God and our neighbour. And to walk in the love of God and of our neighbour, is indeed to walk in God's Commandments, for this is the substance of what all and each of them require of us; and if our hearts be in the real practice of this love, we shall sincerely conform to what God enjoins, forbear what he denies us, and valiantly oppose the desires and motions of our finful nature within us. God did not give out the Law with a purpose that we should lay aside the observance of it; just to shew us our misery, that we might cry for mercy, and then make no more use of it: but he gave us the Law to shew us our guilt because we did not love God and one another; and he gave us the promife to encourage us to walk in the love of himself and our neighbour. The defign of all was to bring us to love, as the apostle plainly witnesses, The end of the Commandment is charity\*; the end of giving out the Law, in which giving it out the promife is contained, is to bring us to the love of God and of each other,— Without the Law we had not known that we were fallen from charity, and the guilt of that state had not been apprehended; without the promife, we had had neither encouragement or power to love. But now the Law and gospel go hand in hand to the same end, the former shewing us what love is, and the latter influencing us to walk in it. So charity is the iffue of all. Hence it is that the truly humble believer takes fo much delight in the Law, and so heartily defires and endeavours to conform to it. Hence he cries unto God daily from the bottom of his foul.

foul, 'Create, O my God, a new spirit within me. I long to · love thee with all my heart, to find the deepest reverence of thy eternal Majesty always there, and to make thee all my trust. Father of mercies, grant me power to glorify thy name, to attend upon thy appointments with holy worship, to maintain only thy glory in all my conduct, to profess myfelf thy fervant in the most religious observance of thine own day. O my God, heal this fountain of fin that is in my nature, that I may perfectly love thee and worthily magnify thy holy oname. Or if it may not yet be destroyed, bring it daily nearer 6 to death that I may feel lefs and lefs its accurfed motions, and may never more confent to them. Let love take its place, the love of thee and of my brother, that I may indulge no more any fensual earthly or devilish lust, but being pure in heart, heavenly-minded, and full of charity, I may honour all men, forgive and do good to all men, and speak as well as act to the edification of my brother.' To fuch a prayer as this the heart of the man who is come to Christ does unfeignedly fay Amen. He is no believer whose heart does not. Yet what is all this, but a defire and disposition wrought in the heart by the holy Ghost to walk in God's Commandments? for I have only put into the form of a prayer the duties that are contained in them.

You see now the use that is to be made of the Law, how it must shew us our sin and misery, drive us to Christ, and be our rule of walking with God as obedient children. If the two former of these be done, the third will unavoidably follow. But the main difficulty lies in the first; the conviction of our real guilt and mifery by the Law. To this point, according to the tenor of the text, the foregoing discourses have been directed. That they have had at least this bleffing I will trust, to have shewn us all more of our fins. How far they may have been instrumental to convince any of us of our misery because of sin, and to stir up in us a hearty concern about falvation, is another question. And it will behove you all to confider how you will answer it on the last day. That day is hastening upon us; a joyful or a terrible day, according as we shall then be found. Who can say how terrible, my dear brethren, to any foul of you, who will not now hear the fentence of the Law to conviction, and therefore shall then hear it to condemnation! But O how joyful to that happy foul, FF2

who, having now heard the fentence of death, is fled to Jesus for refuge, and is walking in his steps, and therefore shall only meet his triumphant Lord in the last day to receive the final sentence of absolution, and to hear those ravishing words from his mouth, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.\* O firs, can such words as these reach our ears without piercing our hearts? May the Lord give us all grace to humble ourselves, that he may exalt us in that day, through the merits of our great Redeemer Jesus Christ.

\* Matt. xxv. 34.

# SERMON XLVII.

### MARK xvi. 15, 16.

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.

A FTER preaching the Law for the discovery of sin, and the fearful ruin fin has brought upon us, I must needs come to you with the offer of the Gospel, that ye may know your case is not desperate, that ye may hear the glad tidings of falvation, that ye may lay hold on eternal life. It is not the ultimate design even of the Law to wound, but by opening the deadly disease of fin, by making the smart of it felt, that it may be a means of directing to the Gospel for a cure. So both Law and Gospel speak the same gracious language, and the one and other points out glory to the finner. Has the Law done its part? Has the Law shewn you, my dear brethren, that ye are finners, guilty finners, condemned finners, helpless sinners? Has it shewn you the plague of your nature, how fenfual, earthly and devilish, how atheistical, ungodly and impious, ye came into the world, have lived therein more or less, and your wretched hearts still are? And are you looking about where to fly; where to cast your guilt; where to get peace with God, peace of conscience, deliverance from the fear of death and judgment, and the fire that shall never be quenched? where to find help against fin, and power to master its influence, and to become again like unto God in the temper of your fouls and the conduct of your lives? Are ye intent upon this fearch after falvation, as having feen that your all, your eternal all depends upon it? that if your guilt be not remitted, your fentence be not reversed, your peace with FF 3

God be not procured, your spirit be not fanctified, you are undone, utterly, eternally undone, and have not the least glimpse of hope in that other world into which time is swiftly carrying you, and where you will live ages unnumbered by any but God, infinitely more than the blades of grass that cover the fields of the earth, the drops that compose the vast ocean, the fands that lie on the shores of it? Are you looking with awful concern upon this amazing scene; and knowing what you are, and what God is, and that it is but a hand's breadth before death will be upon you; do you find this momentous thought pressing upon your heart, 'What shall I do? I, whither shall I go? Ah, that the Lord would have mercy upon me, would turn Taway his eyes from beholding my fins; that the eternal God would look on me as a child; that he would rid me of all my fears and all my fins; that I might behold his face in glory, and live in his favour in that heavenly kingdom that is to come! Surely my foul should bless him, his mercy should be all my fong, and I would be as loud and earnest as any of the bleffed inhabitants of that everlasting city in shewing forth his praise.' And is this indeed your wish? Would you esteem yourself happy could you look on God as your friend, death without fear, judgment as the day of your hope, the joys above as your inheritance? Why all thefe things are to be had in Christ, they are all laid up in him, Pardon, Peace, Adoption, Refurrection, Life, Glory, are all laid up in Christ; and what is more comfortable, more encouraging, you may have them all as freely as you will ask for them. Nay they are all offered you; nay you are pressed to receive them; nay you are commanded to do it; yea your refusal of God's free gift will be taken so ill that you shall be damned for not accepting it.

I am not now to tell you who Christ is, or what he has done; how for us men and for our falvation he came down from heaven,' and by his obedience unto death both fulfilled the Law, and fatisfied the curse of it. At the time when Christ spoke the words of the text, he was rifen from the dead, and it was manifest thereby to the very eyes of his Apostles, that the great work of redemption which he had undertaken was actually completed. It remained only to make it known.-His personal presence was required in heaven; and therefore he commissions them to publish, declare, and offer this redemption

demption to finful men. Go ye into all the world, &c. I will just open the words in the order wherein they lie, and then

apply them.

Hear then Christ's commission to his disciples. And if his commission, then he speaks by them. Go; it is I send you.— Deliver this meffage in my name. Should any ask you by what authority you declare these things, say you are fent by me, and shew them these words of mine by which I impower and command you to go; you and all after you that I shall fend forth to preach the Gospel. Go into all the world, not to the Jews only but to the Gentiles, to people of every name and language under heaven. Your commission is unlimited, I will have none excepted. Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; you shall carry the offer of salvation with you, and make a tender of it to every foul. I will have every creature told he may be faved if he will. I will have every creature invited to accept eternal life in me. You are to pass by no one, neither circumcifed nor uncircumcifed. Scythian nor Barbarian, bond nor free. Let them know that all and every one of them is welcome. I will have my Gospel preached in all the world, and offered to every creature whereever you go. Offer it to the fick as well as the whole, to the bad as well as the good. I will have no one on any pretence passed by; for all are welcome: and I will have all told so in my name, and convinced that they are fo by this commission which I give you to shew them. And to you I declare farther, what I require you also to declare wheresoever you go preaching the Gospel? he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved. Whatever finner heartily accepts this my falvation, preached by you and others unto the end of the world, so as to become my disciple indeed, receiving the Gospel in the whole fulness of it, as a salvation from the guilt and power of sin; and so believing is baptized in token of his faith in me and dependence upon me, not only putting away the filth of the flesh but having the answer of a good conscience towards God; I tell you, and will have you declare publicly, that that man, whatever he has been before, shall be faved. But he that believeth not shall be damned. That I will have you remember yourselves to quicken your diligence in preaching the Gospel. And that I will have you declare in all places, as an encouragement to the broken-hearted, that they may know from my mouth, that nothing FF 4

nothing else but unbelief shall damn men; and to alarm those who lie dead in trespasses and sins, and those who will not receive me: Gotherefore into all the world, and say to every creature, He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that be-

lieveth not shall be damned.

You see now the force of the words, and the authority we have, as Christ's messengers, to offer the Gospel to you. I am guilty therefore of no prefumption, and go not a jot beyoud my orders, when I tell you, that I am fent to you by Christ Jesus the Lord of all, the Judge of quick and dead, to offer unto you the forgiveness of all your fins, perfect peace and reconciliation with the Almighty God, and all the bleffings of the kingdom of heaven in him. And in the name of Jesus, and by the commission which you see he has given me, I do this day offer this whole glorious falvation to all of you, and to every fingle foul of you here present. By the same authority, I declare to you all this day, that if ye accept the offer, and deal fincerely with God in it, all and whoever among you does fo shall be faved. And farther, in the name of Jesus I do also this day charge and require you all to accept it, upon pain of the eternal displeasure of Almighty God, and of your own endless damnation. And remember that no excuse will be allowed; you may not keep back because you are guilty, nor refuse because you have the pleasures or interests of this world upon your hands; for I am bid to tell you in the plainest words, that if you believe not, and whosoever among you believeth not, shall be damned.

Thus I deliver my message. And now I desire to persuade you that you will accept the offer. And here I will mention

two points:

First, The certainty of your ruin out of Christ, and of your

falvation in him.

Secondly, The greatness of your ruin if you slight his offer,

and of your falvation if you close with it.

First, I befeech you to accept the offer this day made you, by the confideration of the certainty of your ruin out of Christ, and of your falvation in him. Neither of these stands upon probabilities or peradventures; the one and other being as certain as the unchangeable truth of God. For what doth the word of God say on the one part and the other? It says,

On the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.'\* It fays, 'Though hand join in hand, yet fin shall not be unpunished.'t It declares, 'The wages of fin is death.'t And infifts, 'There is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be faved, but only the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.' On the other part, it speaks with a like fulness; Whosoever believeth on him, shall not e perish but have everlasting life. He that hath the Son of 6 God hath life. 4 There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the slesh, but after the Spirit.' There is no question about the matter on either fide; so that it is alike certain, you are ruined without Christ, and may be faved in him. Now therefore confider: the facts against you are incontestable; you have sinned; it is as certain you were born in fin, as that you were born at all; as fure that you have lived in fin more or lefs, as that you have lived at all. Then there is no denying God's declarations against sin; and you are not stronger than he to frustrate them and reduce them to nothing. You are a dying man, and you cannot help it; you must appear before the judgement-feat, and cannot avoid it. But you will perish for ever unless you have an interest in Christ; as furely so as you live, as furely as you must die, as certainly as you shall be called out another day before the Judge of the quick and the dead. And is it true also that you may be faved and live for ever if you will? Has the Son of God died for the ungodly; has he commanded that the offer of his falvation be made to you; is that falvation firmer than the heavens, and will it last longer than they; united to Christ, will you see the earth pasfing away with fervent heat, and the heavens wrapped up like a fcroll, yourself the happy witness of a new heaven and earth, the region of righteousness, and your habitation for ever? Are these things indeed so? And will you hesitate a moment whether you shall close in with the offered salvation while you may affuredly have it? Alas! Sirs, if you do not come and lay hold on eternal life in Christ Jesus, the real cause is that you do not believe any of these things; you know indeed that you have done this and that which you have heard God has forbidden

<sup>\*</sup> Gen. ii. 17. † Prov. xi. 21. ‡ Rom. vi. 23. § Acts iv. 10, 12. || John iii 16. ‡ 1 John v. 12. ¶ Rom. viii. 1.

forbidden you; you know also you shall die, as do others: but you do not believe that fin has entailed God's curfe upon you, that you shall certainly appear hereafter before the judgement-feat of Christ, that being such as you are, you shall certainly be damned; that there is no hope for you but in Christ, and that in him you shall enjoy life everlasting. You really believe nothing of all these matters, and that makes you neglect this great falvation, and hear the offer of it fo coldly as you do. But though you believe nothing; yet you cannot help feeing and feeling that you are in a world of mifery, where (in proverbial language) briers and thorns vex and tear you every day till you shall be laid in the dust. And how think you this comes to pass? Is there nothing amis, judge you, when God so afflicts his creatures? Can you imagine it is for any thing else but their sins? And if you do not repent, may you not reasonably conclude that all other God's declared judgments against sin, as well as those you see. feel and fear, will furely be executed? My dear brother, I befeech you venture upon no dreadful experiments. Search feriously into the truth of your case now, and accept offered mercy, while yet the day of falvation is not ended. Try yourfelf by the Law for conviction; and then try Christ for falvation; and you will do a work which you shall never repent of hereafter, and I venture to appeal to yourfelf, whether you are now fatisfied this work is already done.

But Secondly, To the certainty of your ruin or falvation being without Christ or in him, add the greatness of that ruin and of that falvation. The text fets out this in two important words, you shall be saved, you shall be damned. Damned! The very found is terrible; there is not a finner in the world that likes fo much as to hear the dreadful shocking word.— Saved! This is all, you can desire no more. Salvation! It is a word the angels cannot utter with that sensibility of joy that belongs to it. It is the finner's word, the faved finner's word of triumph in life, in death, in glory. Damnation! it is the unhumbled sinner's terror; I cannot name it but he trembles. Damnation! It is the good Redeemer's pity. The thought of it draws tears from his eyes, yea and the very blood from his heart. He fees, the dear compassionate Jesus fees the long and horrible chambers of hell; fees the miferable finners covered over with inextinguishable flames, hears their hopeless cries

for pity, knows they shall never, never, never be delivered. -The forelight of it melts his foul into compassion; he offers himself to suffer in our place, he makes an atonement, he runs between the living and the dead; he cries, 'Here finners, come, come to me, and you shall escape that horrible pit; 4 turn, follow me, and you shall be faved; O come to me, and you shall not die.' And what, my dear friends, shall Jesus thus pity us in vain? Is there refuge from this wrath to come, and shall we not betake ourselves to it? Alas, do but set falvation in the other fcale; over-against the first and second death set resurrection to life, and glory eternal. See, my brethren, what fearful prospects lie in the road of death; mifery every step you go in the peaceless road; misery growing more formidable as you draw nearer your end. Then what mifery in the departing hour! who can tell? for we have not knownit; and they that have may not come back to instructusin it. Yea, and what mifery after death! what mifery at judgment, when the whole creation shall as it were die away at the fight of man's ruin! and for endless horrors! for the fire that never shall be quenched, for the worm that never shall die. - Ah do but compare with these the blessings of falvation! The peaceful conscience walking with God as a reconciled Father, resting in the everlasting arms. The hope full of immortality, fweetening the bitterest passages of life. The departing saint looking up to Jesus, and smiling at death. The spirit made perfect waiting for the refurrection-day with infinite content. The meeting with Jesus in the clouds. The glorified body.— The final absolution. The sentence of life. The shout of angels. The entrance into paradife. The fight of God for ever. The fight of Jesus in his glory. The enjoyment of God world without end. The fervices of heaven. The fellowship of saints. The love, the peace, the joy, the rest, the glory, the fafety, the fecurity for ever of heaven's inhabitants. This is falvation. Salvation, the daughter of true faith. But what is that ugly monster that stands over-against it? It is damnation, the child of fin and unbelief.

And what, my brethren, is unbelief only the cause that any of us shall perish? If we come to Jesus in sincerity, shall we escape all these things that are coming upon the world of the ungodly, and share in all this so vast salvation? So Christ himself tells us, you see; for I am but arguing from his own

words

words. And are we already fentenced to this so great a death? And yet is this so great a life this day freely offered us? I am almost assamed to ask which you will choose. But I know the enemy of souls will be striving hard to catch away the purpose which, I am hoping, now glows upon your heart. And will you suffer him? He will certainly do it, unless you call upon God to help you. I beseech you therefore by all your eternal hopes, go and pray; pray that the thoughts which have been suggested to you may sink deep into your heart. And when at any time you begin to stagger and faint, remember this word, the that believeth and is baptized, shall be faved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned. I earnestly commend you to God's grace, for the sake of his infinite love in Jesus Christ.

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## SERMON XLVIII.

#### I John ii. 3, 4.

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

THIS whole Epistle of St. John is a catholic exhortation: and the special occasion and design of it seems to be, that none, being deceived by the love of fin, might take up an imagination, that what they called faith, was that faving faith, which by the constitution of the Gospel is appointed to be the means of making us partakers of the falvation purchased by Jesus Christ, when it produced not its genuine and proper fruit of obedience in the heart and life. This he had entered upon in the first chapter, and declared very peremptorily, 'If we fay that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darke ness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the · light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another; and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all fin.'\* From which last words, having taken occasion to address some seasonable comforts to sincere believers, who, in the experience of daily infirmities, and in the case of disallowed falls into fin, might be ready to be discouraged, he returns again, in the words of the text, to his main matter; alledging, that though, as he had just before been intimating,

it was true 'that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from 'all sin,' yet they only are partakers of this glorious privilege, who are possessed of that faith in God which engages their hearts and lives into his service. 'And hereby we know, &c.' The truth of the affertion contained in these words is evident. The effects manifestly shew whether any, or what the knowledge is. A man may be well assured that he knows God rightly, if what he knows of him is productive of an obediential spirit and conduct. But if these do not follow, whatever he seems to know, he is still in darkness, and a perfect stranger to a saving knowledge of him. Here therefore we are evidently taught two things.

First, That a right knowledge, or (which is the fame) a right faith, is the only principle of true obedience. And,

Secondly, That true obedience is the direct proof of a right

knowledge or faith.

First, A right knowledge, or faith, is the only principle of true obedience. To know God, is to know him to be what he is; and unless God be known to be that most blessed Being he indeed is, and unless the relation we bear unto him be known also, there can be seen neither motive nor obligation to serve him; so that a right knowledge of God is the main thing. They that live without God, as too many do in christian as well as heathen countries, are such as do not at all know him to be what he is. Did they in any measure of truth know that, they would find some influence from it on the heart and conduct. But it is not every fort of knowledge of God that will produce a true obedience.

To manifest this, let us consider what is meant by obedience. 'Present your bodies,' faith St. Paul to the Romans, 'a living facrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your 'reasonable service.'\* Take bodies here in the most strict and literal sense, and still the obedience of the mind, which alone can make any service reasonable, must be implied in presenting the body to the Lord. The body cannot present itself. It is the heart willingly presenting the body to God, that can make it an acceptable facrifice. So that the life of obedience lies in the willingness of the heart; 'delighting in the law of 'God after the inward man.'† Without this, bodily services

can be neither living, holy, acceptable, nor reasonable. True obedience is the conformity of the whole man to the will of God; a will within to do what God pleases, and a power without to put it in practice. This is strongly expressed by St. Paul to the same Romans; 'Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you' Wherein the spring of obedience, 'from the heart,' the practice of it in the conduct, 'ye have obeyed,' and the rule and measure thereof both for the heart and life, 'that form of doctrine which was delivered you,' are plainly noted.

Now the question is, 'What is that knowledge of God which will produce such a will to do God's pleasure? in

other words, fuch an obedience from the heart?'

It must be observed, that naturally we have no manner of will hereto, but just the very contrary; 'the carnal mind being enmity against God,'+ and that in such a degree, that there is nothing in the whole world we are so averse to as this. Our inclinations carry us quite another way; and that with fuch a desperate hatred of God that we incline to undergo any difficulties or hardships much more readily, than to perform any the least part of the will of God; which is manifested by this fingle instance, amidst many others, that the most of those who toil ten hours of a day in painful labour, find it a thousand times more irksome task, indeed cannot at all prevail on themselves to spend even a quarter of an hour in a day in prayer. How then shall this enmity be overcome. and the will of man brought to the will of God? That it cannot be done where there is no knowledge of God, is unquestionable.

But First, Will not a knowledge of God in his attributes, or as he is in himself absolutely considered, overcome this enmity of the will, and produce an obedience from the heart. Say this knowledge of God should be never so exact and complete; that he were known to be all that glorious God that he is, self-living, all-sufficient, omnipresent, eternal, almighty, most holy, and just and good; that the soul, as I may say, was standing looking upon, and with the utmost diligence and attention contemplating this all-glorious Being; would the effect of this knowledge and sight be the turning of the will

to God to ferve him? What answer does the case of Adam. immediately after the fall, and before the promife was made. furnish us with as to this matter? Before his fall, he faw God with a degree of delight which the heart of man is now a stranger to; but 'then he hid himself,' as well as he could. among the trees of the garden.'\* What made him do fo? it was guilt made him do it; 'he was afraid,'+ he could take no comfort in the fight of God. God indeed was the same. but he was not. He was fallen, he had finned, his heart was gone from God. What then could there be in the fight of an all-perfect Being, whose very perfection pleaded for and threatened his destruction, to engage his heart back again to God? 'He was afraid, and hid himself.' This is the true picture of a guilty creature, looking only upon God according to his effential perfections. The most do not look on God at all. But when any are drawn feriously to consider him, the first thought fills them with fear; and were they not relieved and encouraged by some apprehensions of his mercy, the fight of his excellencies would be fo far from drawing over their wills and hearts to him, that the more they knew of his power. knowledge, eternity, and greatness, the more settled would be their abhorrence of him, as difcerning him in all thefe to be a fure, almighty, everlasting enemy to them. This is the very state of the fallen angels. They know God to be what he is. They know also that he has no mercy for them: and therefore every thought of him, while it makes them tremble. does but unavoidably rouse up the bitter and malignant hatred of their hearts against him, for being what he is. Fallen creatures therefore have no motive in the fight of God, while only under an absolute confideration, to turn unto him to obey him from the heart.

And as they have no metive thereunto, fo neither have they nor can they derive any power to turn unto God from such confideration of him merely. The power of turning to God, in a love of him, and of his Commandments, is not of man but of God; 'Turn thou me, and I shall be turned,' is the language of every truly enlightened soul, knowing who has said, 'A new heart will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your sless, and I

will

will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.'\* Now if the turning of man's apostate will unto God to obey him from the heart be an act of God's power, then there must be a will in God there-But such a will in God does not arise necessarily from his nature. He is not obliged by his holinefs, or justice, or goodness, or any other attribute, to condescend unto fallen creatures, as is plain from the case of fallen angels. And therefore when he does condescend to them to forgive them and put a new heart into them, it is an act of his free and fovereign will, which he is not obliged to in any fort, and which therefore he will dispense in such matter as he pleases; most certainly in such manner as to make those who are partakers of it fensible, that his condescension unto them is not in any degree of debt, but intirely of grace. But now when we look upon God absolutely, and not through a Mediator, and conceive him to have a regard to us, we do not respect this regard to us as an act of mere Sovereign mercy; but, though we may not observe it, as what we have aright to from him, what our circumstances have a claim upon him for; and what it would be contrary to his nature and to equity not to bestow; and the consequence in this case is, that as we do not regard him in humility, so he does not give us that power to turn unto him, which we can have from no other quarter; and fo with whatever speculative knowledge of him, and frequency of thought concerning him, our natural enmity against him still remains, and we do not, and cannot obey him from the heart, with an unfeigned confent and deliberate choice.

And thusyou fee how a knowledge of God, under a mere abfolute view of him, cannot produce true obedience; that is, obedience from the heart, in a fallen creature; and that because to a fallen creature there is, in such a knowledge of God, neither motive nor power unto such obedience. From which consideration we may learn these two things, of great importance to Christian comfort and practice.

First, That the fears and doubts which do perplex the minds of ferious persons have their cause in looking unto God too much in this absolute manner, and not altogether as he mani-

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<sup>\*</sup> Ezek, xxxvi. 26, 27.

fests himself in a Redeemer. It is certain, that the more a guilty, dependent, and accountable creature knows of God absolutely, the more he must be afraid of him. A fin-defiled conscience and the holy Majesty of God can never stand peaceably together. There is consciousness of sin in the very best, of sin, which experience tells them will not be removed out of the way in such manner and to such a degree, as to become a ground of sure and quiet considence in God. And from the increase of this knowledge of God, increasing apprehensions do arise, which will and can yield to nothing but the knowledge of God's mercy in the Mediator, as a sovereien and free act of his will.

The Second is, that in looking too much on God in an abfolute manner, most believers find their progress in grace and holiness going on so slowly. In an absolute God there is, as I have shewn, no motive to engage the heart; and at the same time no power is derived from a mere view of God as he is in himself, enabling us to choose his will, and reject and opppose the natural will of the sless. And yet, as through the native pride of our hearts, and the continual suggestions of unbelief, we are all much more ready to consider God as he is in himself, and as he appears in the works of creation, than as he is manifest in Jesus the Mediator; I doubt not that herein lies a special cause of the abundant unfruitfulness we have to lay to our charge. But to proceed:

Secondly, What cannot be effected by the knowledge of God under an absolute consideration, is nevertheless the certain fruit of truly knowing God in the Redeemer Jesus Christ. And that for this plain reason, because by this knowledge both the things which rendered obedience from the former knowledge of God utterly impossible, are actually taken out of the way; and in the Redeemer Christ both the most constraining motive, and the most effectual power are ministered for obeying God

from the heart.

For First, Whereas in an absolute God the more perfect knowledge of him does but discourage and drive off the soul in fear and torment; in a covenant God through Jesus Christ all is just the reverse, and every perfection of the divine nature, as it comes to be more distinctly discerned, increases the force of the motive for returning to him upon the soul conscious of guilt, and otherwise apprehensive of punishment. While a

a man

manseeshimself justly obnoxious to divine wrath through disobedience, and vet fees God reconciled to him through Jesus Christ. fuch a knowledge of God is extremely fuited to beget a generous felf-displeasure at the thought of having dishonoured such a Majesty, to represent sin in its proper colours of deformity, and to engage the foul into the most deliberate purpose of offending no more against such a God, and of giving itself entirely up to his will and glory. But it is not reconciliation merely, but God's method of reconciliation and shewing mercy, which gives this argument its proper and full weight. ' Justice · shall be done upon fin, while mercy is shewn to the sinner. The word will become flesh, and himself make an atonee ment,' that in the very manner of shewing mercy we may fee what we owe to justice, and so may want no motive to obedience which either deliverance from the deepest misery due to fin, or the display of the richest mercy by the freest act of condescending divine love, can possibly prefent us. Sirs, who would think there could be fo much as one foul standing out in disobedience, wherever this amazing mystery of love, the incarnation and death of the only Begotten of the Father, for and in the place of the ungodly, has been but only heard of? But that guilty creatures, who dared not otherwise look God in the face, should hear, and know, and have explained to them from day to day the riches of redeeming love, the incarnation, the life, the death of the eternal Son for fin and for finners, and God's freest offers of mercy and acceptance in him; that they should so continually hear and know this (as you all do my brethren) and yet find their hearts unmoved, unconstrained, still as much in love with fin and at enmity with God as ever: This is strange! It would be unaccountable, were it not most easily to be accounted for by the vile corruption of nature that dwells in us, and whereof this is fo pregnant and lamentable a proof. Without this motive there could be no obeying from the heart; but fad experience shews, that even such a motive as this is not of itself sufficient to beget true obedience in a fallen creature, and that after all, unless God make this glorious motive effectual, by working in us thereby to will and do, all is in vain, and we shall be never brought to obey from the heart that very law of God which possibly we may be brought to see and to confess to be holy, just, and good. G G 2 But

But now, Secondly, In a covenant God this also is provided for; and though an absolute God does not give grace and strength, yet a reconciled God, a God in Christ does. this relation he is stilled the hearer of prayer. Nay the very business of the Spirit in this dispensation of divine grace and love, is to work upon the hearts of us finners, preventing us with good defires, and enabling us to bring the fame to good effect. The foul of man is the subject where the Spirit works conviction and conversion; and this he does by his facred illuminations, whereby he discovers the misery of a fallen state, and the glorious remedy there is in Jefus; wherein by difclofing the love of God in Jesus Christ, he stirs up and enables the heart to turn unto God in love, and in a cheerful willingness to ferve, pleafe, and glorify him. It is the Spirit that overcomes the enmity, while the means he uses is God's love in Christ. And all this you may observe in the most rational manner, perfectly confiftent with the freeft use of our reason. and the freest choice of our will. For as in a reconciled God he proposes to our reason or understanding the most suitable and convincing argument unto our obedience, fo thereby he ftirs up our wills in the most deliberate manner, with the freest consent, and without the least constraint or violence to choose the holy way of God's commandments.

Thus you fee what that knowledge or faith is which is the principle of true obedience; and therein that what cannot be obtained through a knowledge of God at large, is really and effectually wrought by the knowledge of God in Christ.

Hence we learn,

First, That it is by a constant contemplation of God in Christ, and in a dependence on the Spirit, that we shall grow into a more perfect conformity of the whole man (spirit, soul and body) unto the commandments of God. Here is the only motive that can engage our souls, by at once removing our apprehensions of God's wrath against us, and representing to us the most desirable and condescending object; and to this also the operations of the Spirit are absolutely confined, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace. If we are not under this influence, we have in fact no real obedience, whatever persuasions we may be under, or whatever specious appearances to the contrary we may have to produce, but our enmity against God remains upon our hearts; and if we are

under it, yet the only reason why we are not more advanced in obedience, is because this glorious motive is not more powerfully and abidingly fixed in our hearts. The love of Christ constraineth us,' saith St. Paul, 'because we thus iudge, that if one died for all, then were all dead. And that he died for all, that they which live, should not hence. forth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again.'\* Wherefore, brethren, let us labour earnestly, that 'Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith.'+ Remark the word dwell; not be admitted into us as one that comes to make us a visit, however frequent, but may have a constant abidance. This, this is the only way of comfort and victory. The more Christ is in you, the more sin will fall before him, and hope and love flourish. You will never repent the pains you take to entertain fuch a guest: behold his reward is with him every hour. Let Christ dwell with you here, and death shall not part you asunder, nay you shall dwell with him for ever.

Secondly, We may learn hence also, in what manner we should receive the message of mercy brought us by our incarnate God. Thankfully, without all question; with hearts bearing some, though no proportion of gratitude to the vastness of the gift. God passed by sinning angels; he sent redemption to us. And such redemption! O Sirs, what shall we think of it in heaven, yea, what upon our dying beds? Tell it out among the people; let the world know that their Redeemer liveth. Ah, my dear brethren, let us not be insensible to this love; let us not be assamed of the only name under heaven whereby we must be saved; let us not disgrace that holy name whereby we are called. I beseech you by all this mercy of God, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

The time fet apart for the remembrance of our Lord's apappearance in the flesh is before us. And how shall we commemorate that blessed manifestation? Shall we do it with spiritual or with carnal joy? Let us consider beforehand. What, is it a time for riot, debauch, and excess? This cannot be. He came to destroy the works of the devil. Holy joy becomes holy days. 'To us a child is born, to us a Son is given;' a

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Son to pardon, fanctify and bless. Let our hearts be lifted up. Let the praises of God be in our mouths. Let the work of the Lord be on our hands. Let Jesus be glorified in us, and by us. Brethren be on your guard. The enemy will not be affeep. It is a feafon of temptation. One or another of you have found him working already, and prompting to your minds schemes of indulgence or riot. Take heed. Behold, you are warned. Do not fo great wickedness, which the devil will be fure to drive you into if he can. What, when we pretend to remember the birth of the Son of God to fave us, shall we do works that will shame him, and damn us, unless mercy aferwards interpole? I intreat you to remember that Christmas is the season of commemorating the nativity of the Holy One; and not, as it is usually taken, a season for every fort of foolish mirth and abominable licentiousness. And therefore do not yield to the finful thought, 'Now, 6 Christmas is at hand, and I will keep it merrily. The mirth you propose is no other than madness. Away with these practices; Christmas is not a Heathen feast. Behold, you are warned. And I trust in God you will be cautious, and demean yourselves in such manner, that your hearts and conduct shall be in concord with, and under the spirit of that Anthem with which the Angels ushered the only Begotten into the world, when the multitude of them brake forth and fang, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men .-This is the way to express your thankfulness. And thus let us keep the feast.

# SERMON XLIX.

### I JOHN ii. 3, 4.

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

HAVE shewn you from these words, that a right knowledge or faith is the only principle of true obedience.— The obedience here intended is that only which can deserve the name; the obedience of the whole man, beginning in the deliberate choice of the heart, and iffuing in a conformity of the conduct with the will of God. Without any knowledge of God at all, that this obedience is impossible, every one sees. But, although God should be perfectly known to be all that he is, yet if he be known only absolutely, that is, without respect to the mediation of Jesus Christ, by us guilty and perverted creatures, there is nothing in that knowledge which could draw over our hearts unto him; nor would that knowledge give us the least power of turning to him: but on the contrary, the more perfectly we should know God in this absolute manner, the more fearfully we should hate him for being fuch a God as he is; fo great and mighty, fo eternal and ever present with us: because, however perfect in himfelf, we should in all his perfections see him against us, while also he does not communicate unto us any grace (without which we cannot choose his service) but as we look unto him through the Redeemer. Wherefore that knowledge or faith, which constrains the heart unto obedience, is the knowledge Qf'

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of God in Christ; and this is, and only can be, a principle of obeying God from the heart. Having feen therefore what that knowledge or faith is, which is the principle of real obe-

dience, we will now,

Secondly, Endeavour to shew, that obedience from the heart is the direct proof of fuch a knowledge or faith; 'We do know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments. He that faith, I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.' Here this is manifest, 'That where there is a true knowledge of God in · Christ, obedience from the heart is the certain and necessary effect of that knowledge.' From which it will follow of confequence.

First, That obedience from the heart is an infallible proof of the truth of our faith or knowledge. And that therefore,

Secondly, Where this proof is not, it is a mere lie to fay we

know God.

The two latter, you observe, are plain consequences from the former. For if the knowledge of God in Christ, and that only (as has been shewn) does necessarily constrain the heart unto obedience, then on the one fide obedience from the heart must prove our knowledge to be of the right fort, and the want of that obedience convince us that we have not that knowledge. The doctrine is,

Where there is a true knowledge of God in Christ, obedience from the heart is the certain and necessary effect of

it.'—And that for these two reasons,

First, Because of the incomparable excellency, loveliness, and desirableness of the object. There is that in the blessed God, which, when it is feen, and feen, observe with felfapplication, as what we have an interest in, is infinitely fuited to engage the heart of any rational creature, whether angel in heaven or finner upon earth. Devils only may not appropriate God unto themselves, and therefore their knowledge of his excellencies cannot engage their spirits unto him. But when, to fay nothing of angels, a finful man beholds the fair beauty of the Lord in the face of Jesus Christ; beholds him as what he is, a Spirit felf-existing, and whose effential property it is to have life in himself, a Spirit filling the universe with his presence, and upholding and directing both it and every thing in it, great and little, by his amazing operation, almighty

mighty in his power to do even what he pleases, and everlasting without possibility of decay, while generations and worlds rife up and pass away; a Spirit too to whose free goodness he owes his being, his foul and body, and every enjoyment and means of happiness, nay and upon whom, though he be a finner, he can look as his God, reconciled by a method, the glory of which aftonishes and dazzles the eyes of the most exalted creatures, while they confider the wifdom, grace, and love held out in it: I fay, when the enlightned finner beholds the fair beauty of the Lord in the face of Jesus, he finds an object before him infinitely fuited to engage his heart, whom he cannot choose but love supremely and delight in, whom he would have to be honoured through the whole creation, whom he thinks it his glory to obey, and besides whom there is none in heaven or earth that he can defire. In the fight of this object, fin appears in its true colours of deformity, and holiness in its proper beauty. The whole man stands prepared to obey, and fixing itfelf on the revealed will, is asking with chearfulness, What wilt thou have me to do?

Secondly, The other reason why this knowledge of God begets obedience in the heart, is because it was revealed to this very purpose, that the Spirit having enlightened the dark soul in the knowledge of God reconciled in Jesus Christ, might thereby influence and engage the heart unto a conformity with him. Thus, it is faid, 'Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.'\* And, when God made himself known to Abraham as his God, he speaks thus, I am the almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.'+ And so at the giving out of the Law, we find God speaking in the character of a Covenant God, as moving us to obedience thereunto, 'I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have no other gods but me.'\* And in short, 'The end of the Commandment is charity,'t the defign and completion of the Gospel is the love of God and our neighbour. Now if the very purpose of God's thus revealing himself in Jesus Christ was that we might be ' fanctified through faith that is in him,'t it cannot be, that the Spirit should make this revelation of God in the foul, and not thereby form the heart unto obedience.

<sup>\*</sup> Titus ii. 14. † Gen. xvii. 1. ‡ Exod. xx. 2, 3. § 1 Tim. i. 5.

That he does hereby work unto the begetting and nourishing love in the hearts of all who really know God in Jesus Christ, is expressly assured. St Paul says of himself, That as soon as ever it pleased the Lord, who had called him by his grace, to appoint him his commission, 'he was not disobedient to the 'heavenly vision.'\* He was all readiness, and went directly to his work. And he says elsewhere of himself, and all believers, 'We all with open sace, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord:'t where the motive, the agent, and the work are most plainly marked out and placed together.

From these two reasons it appears, that wherever there is a true knowledge of God in Christ, there obedience from the heart necessarily follows. And you see in what manner it follows; namely, by the glory and loveliness of the object presented to the soul, which while the mind is regarding and beholding the Spirit, takes occasion by that blessed sight to turn the heart unto God. From hence I must make two very

needful remarks.

The First is concerning unfruitful knowledge, that it is indeed no knowledge at all; for it does not fet up the object in the mind, and so has no effect on the heart. I say it is no real knowledge or faith concerning God. It is not a knowledge of God evangelically feen, for fo it would beget love; and it is not a knowledge of God in an absolute view, for then at least it would beget fear. But it begets neither love nor fear, and therefore is not really any knowledge at all. Real knowledge or belief of any thing does unavoidably influence us, according to the importance of that thing to us; and where there is no influence, there is really no belief or knowledge concerning things which are of the very fmallest moment to us. So that that state of mind wherein men do neither fear God's wrath, nor love him for his mercy, is plain atheism. There is no real belief or knowledge of God's being in it; although through certain fuspicions, taken up by hearfay, and conceived upon the opinions of others, there are oftentimes fome disquieting apprehensions raised in the soul. Nevertheless this is evidently the general knowledge of God that is in the world; and this the state of unbelief wherein all lie, till

God by his Spirit does begin to make himself known within Then he begins to be taken notice of, he is feen as a real object before the eyes of the mind, and the effect on the heart follows in trembling or love, as God is feen abfolutely or through a Redeemer. And this is the awful difference

between true and false faith or knowledge.

The Second remark is concerning true believers. The matter now explained shews us the very reason why they are not more stedfast in their love and obedience; namely, because their knowledge of God in Christ is not enough deep and clear, or not fufficiently impressed on the mind so as to keep the bleffed object present therein. Some do not earnestly follow on to know the Lord, what he is in himself, and what in the face of Jesus Christ; and others, when they have obtained some more lively discoveries of the divine glory, are not careful enough to keep them in view. The consequence of which, whether imperfect knowledge or forgetfulness is, that the heart is without that due influence, which more distinct and abiding knowledge would maintain upon it; and the goings out of the affections in love, defire, delight, trust, and zeal for the honour and fervice of God, are cold, infrequent, and without fufficient strength to keep the foul in a state of readiness for all duty, and of resolute preparedness to repress all the rifings of corruption, and to bear up all temptations and fufferings. So that if we expect to maintain a healthy. vigorous, active, and advancing state of foul, we must acquaint ourselves with God, and walk in the sense of his presence.-Otherwise we suffer a veil to be thrown over our eyes, which hinders us from the only fight by which the Spirit works upon our hearts to engage them unto God.

What we have been faying on this head, fufficiently shews that obedience from the heart does necessarily follow a right

and true knowledge and faith. And if fo, then

First, Obedience from the heart is an infallible proof of the truth of our knowledge or faith. For if the knowledge of God in Christ does, and can only draw over the heart unto God in a true spirit of obedience, then that obedience from the heart must needs prove such a knowledge or faith to have an actual being, existence and abidance within us. No man can love, fear, honour and ferve God, without some reason; and whoever really does this, can only do it because he knows

God in Christ to be infinitely worthy of, and entitled to all this obedience of the inner and outward man. Do you really love God, and choose to serve him? Observe why you do so. Is it not for that which you see in him as he hath manifested himself in the face of Jesus Christ? Does he not appear to you there bearing a commanding and amiable character, fo that you cannot refuse him your heart and service? And does not every repeated view you take of him in that glass draw out your heart to him afresh? Or is it any thing but such a knowledge of the bleffed God which restrains you from indulging your natural inclinations, or engages you to the performance of his will? Hereby therefore you know that you really know him. Your obedience proves it to your own conscience, because you plainly fee, that you only love and ferve him because you know him to be such a God as he is, and as he has shewn himfelf to be in the gospel. Obedience from the heart then is an infallible proof of a right knowledge or faith; it issues from it; and were the actings of the mind observed, would be evidently feen to do fo. This, I fay, infallibly proves the knowledge or faith to be real, for if it were not fo, it could not possibly produce any fuch fruits of obedience. Nav. and the habit and course of obedience necessarily proves the faith to be more than a mere hafty notion, and to have a subsistence in the mind, because it does habitually work by love. So that if we do really love God, and from our hearts obey him, we may hereby affuredly know that we know him. Here then the point of importance is before us; do we know God in Christ? If we do, we obey him from the heart. If we obey him from the heart, we know that we know him. This is the order; and we must take heed we do not confound it; neither feeking to obey God without knowing him in Christ, which is impossible, nor conceiting that we know him in Christ, if we do not obey him, which is a lie. This leads to the other confequence of this doctrine; namely,

Secondly, 'If we fay, we know him, and keep not his 'Commandments, we lie.' You fee how plain and peremptory the Apostle is. To say, we know God in Christ, and not to obey him, is a mere lie. Well then, I fear there are many liars in the world; for it is too evident that there are many who profess to know God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, who are very far from keeping God's Commandments, take

no manner of care to do fo, indeed are with the utmost careless-

ness breaking them every day. But how is this a lie?

Why, First, It is a lie, because the thing is absolutely false in itself. They who do not obey God, do not know him—have actually no faith or knowledge of God in Christ in them; and if they say they have, they say that which is not true: for it has been shewn incontestably, that wherever that knowledge of God is, it brings forth obedience to him; so that where the obedience is not, there the faith cannot be.

And, Secondly, It is a lie, because the person who says it knows it to be no other; for while he fays that he does know God, he is very fenfible in his own conscience that he does not know him. Will a man feriously say, that he certainly and stedfastly knows God to be a holy, jealous and almighty Being, privy to all his conduct, and to whom he is accountable, when at the same time he finds no fear of him in his heart, though he be acting in fuch a manner as is exactly fuited to provoke him? Or again, that he knows God to be reconciled, merciful, infinitely good and gracious, and in all the fulness of his eternal perfections his God, when he does not at the same time love him? The truth is, God is not an object whom we may know, as we do a thousand other things with which we have little or no concern. We are fo related to him, and our happiness or misery are so wrapt up in his favour or displeasure, that the very moment we know him to be what he is, our hearts feel the impression of that knowledge in fear or love, as we behold him against us or for us. And therefore for a man to fay, I know God, when he neither fears nor loves him, is to affert what he absolutely knows to be false: for he knows very well that he does not know God to be that God he is; that he does not know him to be that almighty, eternal, and ever-prefent Being, who is about his path and bed, and spieth out all his ways; in whose favour is life, and his frown hell: for when at any time he should reflect on what is laid up in his mind, he would find no fuch knowledge of God there. So that if any man should dare to fay, I know God in his absolute character, when he does not fear him, and much more, I know him in Jesus Christ, when he does not obey him from the heart, he ventures to fay what he knows to be false, and the truth is not in him.

Confider therefore, finners, who live after the course of the world,

world, and have no heart to ferve the Lord, that you are altogether faithless, and in fact as ignorant of the true God as are the heathen who have not your advantages. You profess to know God, but in works you deny him, and therefore you know him not. You may conceit, perhaps, something from your supposed knowledge; but that conceit is, you find, a lie. It is proved to be so every day by your conduct; and how dreadfully will it be proved to be no better another day? O firs, consider how dreadful it will be for you to go down to the grave with this lie in your hand, and then to have it proved to be such before the tribunal of Christ, in the presence of the assembled world, to your inconceivable confusion, and to the utter loss of your soul in the fire that never shall be quenched!

The conclusion of the whole is, let us all acquaint ourselves with God. Gloriously has he unfolded his perfections and will in the gospel. There let us look, even on God manifest in the sless; nor ever take off our eyes, till in that glass we see God awful in justice, rich in mercy, unsearchable in wisdom, and the everblessed object takes our hearts along with it, transforming them into a conformity therewith in love, and desire, and holy fear, and the most complacential obedience. So shall we know that we know him in this world, and be assured of our interest in him, and be prepared for the enjoyment of him in the world that is to come. To which most blessed knowledge of God, may he youchsafe to bring us all.

## SERMON L.

#### Romans i. 16.

I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

MONG the various things which hinder us from embracing, or living agreeably to the Gospel, shame is not the least considerable; and without question has been the occasion of forcing back many from receiving a Saviour, whose followers are of that fect which is every where spoken against, and has perhaps more or less restained all from that freedom and boldness of profession, which their Bibles and consciences have demanded of them. It is indeed an easy matter for a proud heart to fay, I would not regard what people should fay of me: but when we come to make the word of God the rule of our conduct and not the ways and customs of the world, as hereby we become fingular, so we find the dread of particularity has a force we were not before aware of. If the Gospel of Christ be designed to reform the world, it must needs follow that the unreformed part of the world is in a state directly contrary to the Gospel; and while these make up the bulk of mankind in every place, the general countenance will be on their fide, and the few who will venture to have more religion than the fashion of the times allows, must incur the censure of being odd and particular. Their lot must be the same with those of the same good character in the day of Amos, 'They hate him that reproveth in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh

uprightly.'\* If the Gospel was to lie a dead letter, a wicked world would find no fault with it: but whenever it appears in its power and is manifested in the life, it makes the minds of the children of this world too uneasy to permit them to leave the professors of it at quiet. You may be particular as you please on any other head: no body is hurt, and so no one blames. But here, as foon as you are particular by living conformably to the Gospel, all about you are troubled, cannot treat you with cordiality, but at last lose all conscience, and you find yourself become the object of dislike even where you have the greatest defire to please. It is no little matter therefore not to be ashamed of the Gospel, and consequently a point worthy our particular confideration. I am not ashamed of • the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. From which words we may treat of these two things.

First, When we may be said not to be ashamed of the Gospel

of Christ.

Secondly, Why we should not be ashamed of it.

First, We may enquire when we may be faid not to be

ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. And this is the case,

First, When we own it. We are ashamed of that we dare not own: but what we avow, we cannot be faid to be ashamed of. To own Christ, is to let the world fee you belong to him. This is confession of Christ before men. But if you would be Christ's, yet decline acting in such a manner as to be thought his, you do not confess him, you deny him before men, and are plainly ashamed of him. The question is not whether you have more or less an inward shame upon your heart; but whether you oppose that finful shame of your heart; lament it, and are not restrained by it from owning Christ and his words. In that case it is plain enough you confess him, and that you do it in direct contradiction to the strivings of your own spirit, argues evidently that you prefer his honour to your own. Now it must be observed that all of us either own or disown the Gospel; we must do the one or other: and I am fure it behoves us to confider whether of the two we do. Do we own Christ to be the only Saviour of the world, and are all that know us acquainted with our stedfast persuasion, that there is falvation in none other, that all the liberality, harmlessness

No. 7.

lessness, honesty and sobriety in the world will not bring any man to heaven, but that only through the merits of the Redeemer, we can have the least ground of hope toward God? And do they know also that we avow the words of Christ, and the way of a Gospel-life, and hold ourselves and all others obliged to walk as Christ also walked, though in the world, yet above it, in a spiritual not a carnal life, and under the influence of a prevailing concern for God's glory in the world, and of an unfeigned regard for the falvation of our neighbours? Is this the reckoning others make of us? Then it is plain we must have owned Christ and his words. But if the world does not thus think of us, and we pass for those that are of the world, for those who will do as do others, and are not for more religion than is common; it is not less manifest in that case, that we have not owned the Gospel; a little inquiry into our conduct may convince us we have difowned it; and it is but too plain that we have been held in the fetters of a worldly shame of the Gospel of Christ.

Secondly, We are not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ when we live agreeably to it. And whatever profession we otherwife make of it, however bold we may be to own it, and however warmly we may contend for it, yet if we do not live it, all is but false fire, it is manifest that we do not love it, and our contention for the Gospel is not for the Gospel's sake, but our own, for the fake of our own pride and vanity. We act under a mistaken zeal, propt up by passion, self, and conceit; and were these false props taken away, should find it as hard a matter for us as for our neighbours not to be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. I am not contending for cowardice and hiding the head, nor do I in the least desire to restrain that pure zeal which is begotten by humility, faith and love: but fince there is such a thing as mistaken zeal, vastly apt to deceive those who are under the guidance of it, into a good, if not an high, opinion of their state, for this very reason, because they are bold in owning the Gospel, I am observing, that all such confession as is not accompanied with a Gospel-life, is not owning Christ, but self. If I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, I am nothing.'\* If while we are not ashamed to own the Gospel, we be careful to live it, and to

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shew the regard we bear to it by the effect it has upon our hearts and lives, engaging us to a conduct wherein by the belief of the things revealed and promifed, and conferred in Jesus Christ, we are manifestly influenced to a pure, holy, and self-denying conversation, then we may be affured that we are not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. If we live as becometh the Gospel in the midst of an adultrous world, then there can be no question concerning the matter, it is plain that we are not ashamed of it.

Thirdly, If we are not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, we shall endeavour to recommend it to the world. When people are not for making a shew of religion, as they will perversely, call all profession, but industriously keep to themselves the little piety they think themselves possessed of, no way reproving the works of darkness, but fashioning their behaviour after the smooth easy way of the times; such as these are persectly strangers to a Gospel spirit, understand not the force of the precept, 'Let your light shine before men,' and have struck out of Christianity the two glorious distinguishing principles of it, 'concern for God's honour, and for the fouls of others:' fo under the cloke of a false humility, and dread of oftentation, they are chained down, enflaved, and acted by a worldly shame of the Gospel of Christ. Whereas they who are not ashamed of it, but glory in it, will defire and endeavour it may fpread for the common welfare and for the glory of its Author, nor will be wanting to use their influence (whatever it be) toward promoting and enlarging it. And while they are so doing, they will not be without a proof, that they are opposing the natural shame of their hearts under the influence of an evangelical spirit of zeal and charity.

Fourthly, It will be a good mark of our not being ashamed of the gospel of Christ, if we are not 'ashamed of any,' because they are ill liked by others for living in conformity with it. It was astrong symptom of subjection to worldly shame in Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night, that no one should know it; but it was a sign of a better spirit in Lydia, when she received Paul and Silas into her house. When Peter denied that he knew Christ, his wordly apprehensions had got the better of him; but when he afterwards bore witness to his Master in the face of the Jewish council, grace prevailed against nature. When men are run down by the world for following Christ

and their confciences according to the Scripture rule, then to fland up in their defence, and not to difown or give them up to a general outcry, is manifestly to shew we are not under the guidance of worldly shame.

What has been faid may suffice to teach us when we are not

ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. I am now to shew,

Secondly, The reason here alledged why we should not be ashamed of it. 'For it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth.' What we are to understand by the Gospel's being the power of God unto falvation, may be learnt from the same expression in the second Epistle to the Corinthians, 'The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.'\* The Gofpel is mighty through God, or powerful through God, to the pulling down of strongholds. So the sense of the passage before us is, the Gospel is efficacious through the might and power of God unto falvation to every one that believeth.-And if it be the only means of falvation, and is made effectual to falvation by the power of God, we need not be ashamed of it, but rather ought exceedingly, and above all things to glory in it. Here are two arguments for our glorying in, and not being ashamed of the Gospel.

First, It is the only means of falvation.

Secondly, It is made effectual to the salvation of those that

believe by the power of God.

First, We need not be ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the only means of falvation. The Gospel is the remedy for man's misery. It has healing under its wings. Its healing qualities are manifest, it brings with it pardon and peace, grace and glory. Look upon yourfelf. What are you? Are you not a man of forrows, does not disappointment come to you with every hour, are you not complaining of bodily infirmity, is not the grave opening its mouth to receive you, and moulder you into your original dust? And are you not a finner too as well as a mortal man, and have you no apprehensions from that side; if you fear not God's present judgements, have you no dread of his future; have you no shrinking at the thought of a judgment-day and an eternal world? Now where will you fix your foot? Alas! you can turn no H H 2 whither

whither but to the Gospel. And does that make ample provifion for all your complaints? It does; it proclaims to you free pardon, it promises you the communications of divine grace and love, it discovers to you another life, and therein a body no more capable of pain, fickness or corruption, a foul purged from fin, and in both a happy eternity with God in a new heaven and a new earth. It presents all these glorious things to us as unquestionably certain, being procured by the transactions of the Son of God, according to the purpose of the covenant of grace, devised and determined before the worlds were made. I befeech you, my dear friends, is this a thing for a man to be ashamed of? Does it become a sinful creature, for whose sake the eternal God has prepared it, to be ashamed of such a work of God as this; Angels ushered Jesus unto the world with fongs of triumph, and shall we be ashamed of him? Ashamed to own him who cometh to us, bringing falvation fo great, fo full, fo eternal; Shall we be ashamed of his very name, ashamed to be thought his disciples; through shame shall we betray his interests, and shun any for belonging to him? What, is there any other Saviour, is the great God our Saviour one to be ashamed of, or is the salvation he proposes to us such as may justly be treated with ridicule by a lost world, or which we should forbear to own, to practife, to recommend and encourage, because sinful men are so obstinate that they will not receive it? Did our Apostle thus regard it? Who can express the glorying of his heart in a gospel, which through the merits of his honoured Master, 'was the power of God unto falvation, to every one that believeth?' He confessed it, lived it, carried it from kingdom to kingdom in the face of every perfecution which men or devils could raife against him; he was the Friend, the Father of all that embraced it. He was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, It was the Gospel, glad tidings of falvation; it was the Gospel of Jesus, his adored Lord and God: he could not be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.

But Secondly, We need not be ashamed of the Gospel, because it is made effectual by the power of God to the salvation of those that believe. Sufficient as the Gospel is to salvation in itself, it is not effectually salvation to any soul to whom it is not immediately made so by the power of God, stirring up the heart to receive it and obey it. It is the power of God that makes

it effectual; just as much the power of God that begets a lively faith in the heart of a finner, as it was the power of God that made man out of the ground. The one is as much God's creation as the other, and fo the latter is often called in the New Testament. 'We are his workmanship, created in Christ • Jesus.\* The new man after God is created in righteoufness.+' Now when God manifests his power in renewing and quickning the dead hearts of finners through the Gospel, when it is his own work, when hereby he declares the Gospel to be from himself, and does in so wonderful a manner own and honour it, ought we to be ashamed of that Gospel which God so gloriously sets his mark upon as his? The Gospel this made alive by the power of God, is his witness of himself among fallen men, and ought to be revered wherever it comes, or however mean the subject be in whom it appears. What shall we say then, if while some despife, others are ashamed of the work of God? A work so condescending in the majesty of heaven; a work so infinitely valuable in regard of us! It is the Gospel God owns, he owns nothing else, by making it the means of holiness and falvation. There are many pretended schemes of religion, but God bears witness to none of them, by none of them doth he work to convert and fave a foul; this honour he referves for his own contrivance, the Gospel, which alone he makes effectual to the faving of those who believe. It was in these views that our Apostle so greatly boasted in the Gospel. And whoever fees as he did, that it is God who gives effect to the preaching of it, exerting his power upon the hearts of finners to awaken them out of their natural state of sin, convincing them of their misery and of his mercy in Jesus Christ, conforming them to his mind and image, and enabling them in the spirit of meekness, humility, zeal and charity, to lead a heavenly life upon earth, will no more than St. Paul be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ

From the two confiderations proposed to us in this second

head, we may learn these two things for practice.

First, We may see here the reason of being ashamed of the Gospel to lie in this, that we do not as we ought stedsastly believe it to be the means and only means of salvation, and that it is effectually made so by the power and operation of God.

HH 3

The world of mankind slights the Gospel because otherwise engaged, yea and dislikes the Gospel because all its proposals are of a spiritual nature; insensible of their danger, without it they have never made account of its offers of pardon, and in love with sin, they have not relished its precepts of holiness. Others, brought to some sight of their want of the Gospel, have never been made certainly to believe its truth, nor clearly to behold its glory, and so have wanted a purpose of heart to renounce the world, and having stopt short, have been kept back by a shame of the Gospel of Christ from the profession and practice of it. Wherefore,

Secondly, If you will get above this finful shame of the Gospel, own it, live it, recommend and encourage it in the face of the world, and get more above the inward shame of it also; there is but this one way to fuch desirable liberty, that we stedfastly believe it. What made our Apostle not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ? He tells us it was this only, that he was fully affured it was the power of God unto falvation to every one that believeth. We must grow in our belief of it and acquaintance with it; be fenfible we do not believe it enough, or know fufficiently its glories, while we are yet any way ashamed of it; and must search deeper into the mysteries of that noble work of God, by which himself is glorified and finners faved. Look upon it in all its fufficiency of falvation, confider it as the only means whereby yourself may be faved, endeavour it may have a more effectual abiding and transforming influence upon your heart, especially see that God in almighty power bears witness to it by word and deed, as a scheme contrived before the worlds were made, and to have its full effect when they shall be no more; and as you advance into this certain knowledge of the Gospel you will not be ashamed of it, but in life and death it will be all your defire and all your boaft, as the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

# SERMON LI.

### HEBREWS ii. 3.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?

YOU fons and daughters of fallen Adam; you mortal men, whose days are numbering out, who are quickly to return to the dust out of which you were taken, yet whose existence must be as the days of heaven; you all are soon to undergo an important change. You know your time is short, you are departing, passing over the stage, and shortly to disappear, your place here to know you again no more for ever.-The world then, what a bubble! the gaieties and enjoyments of it, what a cheat; the supports of it, what a broken reed; the comforts of it, what a vexation; the honours of it, what a vanity; the wealth of it, what a bauble! This death will demonstrate against all who gainsay it; death, that closes the eyes on every earthly thing, and opens them to another, a new, a spiritual, an eternal scene. O what a sight presents itself to the foul the very moment it leaves the body! who can conceive what it shall be to go into that new state, where every visible thing shall be no longer seen, neither man, nor beast, nor house, nor sun, nor earth to be met with? A world of spirits, nothing but spirits! How will all things then appear! What a glorious object the bleffed God to the faint; how terrible to the finner! Heaven how lovely to the one; hell how dreadful to the other! But whither am I carrying you? Toviews great, awful, and interesting indeed. Who can think of them without aftonishment? Yet they ought to be thought of. It is the true business of life to think of them; to think of ourselves as men ready to die, and whose work is to work out salvation Нна while

while we live; to think of our latter end, and of the eternal things that are hastening upon us, that we may not lose ourselves, our eternal selves, in pursuing the vain, deceitful gratisfications of time. I am sure God has thought of them for us graciously, and provided a most glorious salvation for us, which he would have the object of our thought and care, that, whenever we depart hence, we may be happy to all eternity. To enforce this salvation upon you, to plead with you by the greatness of it, and by the danger of neglecting it, is my present design from the words read. 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?' In which words these three things are manifestly contained.

First, The greatness of Gospel falvation. Secondly, That we are too apt to neglect it.

Thirdly, The danger of so doing.

First, Consider the greatness of this Gospel-salvation: in every view of it great. Its end, subject, means, fulness consider-

ed, a great falvation.

Its end great: namely, the manifestation of God's grace and love. The end of all God's doings is his own glory, the afcertaining his rights, and displaying his perfections. So his own glory was the great end of falvation wrought by the Redeemer; he meant to vindicate his fovereignty, to magnify his justice and holinefs, to illustrate his wisdom and power, and to manifest his infinite good-will. Bleffed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace,'\* or that the praise of his grace might be magnified. The end of his adopting us through Christ is, that angels and men might glorify his grace. Our Apostle was commissioned to ' preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, and let all men fee what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God. To the intent, that now (not to men only, but even) unto the principalities and powers (angelical) might be known (and magnified) by (his dispensations to) the church, the manifold wisdom of God.'+ This was a great end, and gives a wonderful importance to the vast transaction of man's falvation. Indeed God's other perfections were magnified by this scheme, but

<sup>\*</sup> Ephes. i. 3, 5.

the main defign was to do honour to his grace and love. The work of creation displays and glorifies God's power, that of providence, his wisdom, and that of vengeance on sinners, his justice; but that of redemption puts them all together, illustriously sets forth his justice, wisdom and power, while its principal aim is the manifestation of God's infinite love.—And is not that salvation great, which is designed for so great an end, the greatest end that can be, the maintaining God's peculiar glory, and devised by himself for so great a purpose?

Again, First, 'The greatness of this falvation appears from the subject of it,' man. Consider man in a natural state, his nature funk into apostasy, destitute of every tendency towards God, yea disposed to hate him, to hate his being and all his perfections, to hate his dominion and law, to hate his provividence and presence; and possessed with all manner of sinful tendencies on the contrary part, having in his fallen nature the feeds of all manner of fenfuality, and every kind of spiritual filthiness; pride, conceit, disobedience, self-will; and, because thus depraved, guilty of treason against the most High. and under the irreversible sentence of the divine curse: yea. by nature also blind and ignorant, yet averse to be taught, hardened and fenfelefs, therefore carelefs about recovery; weak and helpless, yet unwilling to be succoured: withal a fubject to fatan's kingdom, open to all his devices, and living in the midst of every thing pleasing to the natural heart. To avert the eternal wrath fuch a finner deferves, and which the righteous God will not otherwise in any degree remit, by making ample fatisfaction to infinite justice; to effect a perfect reconciliation, for such a sinner with the most holy God: to rectify corrupt nature, and fashion again man's foul to the temper of a creature and the constitution of a servant, and that in full opposition to man's natural lords, the devil, the world, and the flesh; to perfect this work day by day, in contradiction to our strange obstinacy, wilfulness, heedlessness, forgetfulness, and sloth, till the intire image of God be completed, and finful nature utterly destroyed; to spiritualise the body too, as well as the foul, to make this mortal, immortal, this corruptible, incorruptible, this dishonourable, glorious, this weakness, power, this animal, spiritual; to defeat fin and death, and hell and devils; so as that in the day of redemption, (to fay the least) he who was once a sinner shall appear

as if he had never finned; holy, as if he had never been corrupted; alive, as if he had never been mortal; respected by the God of heaven, as if he had never offended; why, sirs, what a work is this! to form that stupendous fabric the universe was not a greater. So vast an undertaking surpasses the strength and capacity of united angels and archangels. It is an enterprise too great for any but God only; 'He saw there was no man, and wondered there was no intercessor; therefore his arm brought salvation unto him, and his righteouse ness it sustained him.'\*

Secondly, Great also is this falvation, in the means of it.'-The work was great, so were the means. Justice, holiness, and majesty, all infinite and divine, must be satisfied, reconciled, magnified, yet the finner must be faved from wrath, accepted to favour, cleanfed from corruption, fanctified and glorified. Who is fufficient for these things? He that undertook the work. But to think of the wonderful method he devised for the purpose! who can forbear crying out at the fight of it, 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and know-· ledge of God! how unfearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.'+ I fay, to think of the means used to effect our falvation, how great the work of falvation is represented therein. To think of God in Trinity consulting before the worlds were, 'Let us fave man!' To think of the covenant of peace then devised, ordered in all things and fure; to think I fay of the whole Trinity engaged in this undertaking, of the Father fending the Son, the Son coming into the world, and the Holy Ghost rendering effectual what the Son had wrought; or to trace out more minutely the various steps of this vast transaction; to consider the promises from of old that engaged for it, the prophefies that foretold it, the various difpensations from the days of Abraham that introduced it, and the whole constitution of the Jewish state that prefigured and led to it; to behold him who was ' in the form of God, and 6 thought it no robbery to be equal with God, making himself of no reputation, taking upon him the form of a fervant, condescending to the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, humbling himfelf, and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.' To contemplate the adorable way of faving finners by his death, and justifying

<sup>\*</sup> Isaiah lix. 16. + Rom. xi. 33. + Philip. ii. 6, 7, 8.

them by his righteoufnefs; to follow the Holy Ghost through all his sanctifying and sealing operations, how he arrests and convinces the hearts of sinners in the full career of sin and indulgence, makes them obedient to the faith, in despite of the strong pleadings which pride and love of the world make to the contrary, and daily adds to their graces, and subdues their corruptions; to lay the whole of the means together, whereby this salvation is wrought, is by various degrees to go up to still

higher apprehensions of the greatness of the work.

Finally, This falvation is great in its completeness and fulness; it answers all the demands of God, and all the wants of the finner. God beholds it with approbation, and fays of it as of his other works, It is very good; Jesus regards it with satisfaction and complacency, and fays, It is finished? the Spirit rejoices in it as concurrently the work of his hands; angels adore and defire to look into it; believers too take up their word and fay This is all my falvation. Justice infinite has nothing to gainfay, infinite holiness makes no objection. It stops the mouth of unbelief, and stills the cry of conscience. It washes away fins of the most scarlet dye, and cleanses the most corrupted heart. It is peace and joy now, it is glory unfading, incorruptible, eternal hereafter. It breaks the bars of death, shuts the mouth of hell, and opens the doors of heaven. It is all a finner can want or wish; it is all he can defire or conceive, and ten thousand times more. None of all the rational world but malignant devils murmur at it, as it robs them of their spoil, and fenfeless finners only difregard it. All in this salvation is full and complete; nothing can be added to it; in time and eternity it is perfect. Every part of it is perfect, and the whole is perfect. It perfectly glorifies God, and perfectly faves man. It has brought earth and heaven together here, and will make them one for ever. Like the work of creation, every the smallest member of it is perfect, and the whole, as the universe, complete. Say then how great a falvation is this, which anfwers every purpose and demand of God, and every possible need of man! O, my friends, have you no hearts to rejoice in this grand, complete, and finished falvation? Shall not that which so amply provides for God's glery and your happiness draw forth your gratitude and praises?

Well, on the whole now I suppose you may be convinced this is a great salvation. And if it be, may it not be proper to enquire,

Secondly,

Secondly, Whether we do not neglect it? That none regard it according to its real worth and excellence, is evident. They who know it best and esteem it most, and walk after it the most strictly, do yet know, love and follow it unworthily; and so must be said in a degree to neglect it. And these will need always to be stirred up, that they neglect not so great salvation. But the text seems rather a warning to those who make none, or very little account of this salvation. And therefore that the exhortation afterwards to follow, may be more seriously applied by such as do indeed neglect this salvation, and render it useless to themselves, I will describe in a few words what it is to neglect this salvation.

And this is in general to make light of it, as it is described in the parable of the marriage feast. They who were bidden took no care to come, 'They made light of it, and went their way, one to his farm, and another to his merchandise.'\* Every man had somewhat else to do, which he liked better, or thought of more importance. When a man goes on his way, minding his earthly things, not caring about salvation, nor thinking it worth while to be at any great pains about it, but passing it by as if it were not his concern, and putting off the thought of it for a season, then it is plain he slights and despites it, and

must be allowed to neglect it. More particularly,

First, You neglect this falvation, when you use not due pains to find out your want of it. We all absolutely want this falvation: but it is manifest many of you are but little sensible of the want of it. Now, I befeech you, whose fault is this but your own? Why, you have never taken any pains to fee how greately you want it. You know you have not allowed yourfelf time to think of your state, and to search out your fins; you will not retire to meditate on death and judgement; you do not pray, nor read God's word with any defire of knowing your miserable condition; and so you live on in a wilful unconcernedness about your foul. Now what is this but neglecting falvation? I am fure you would reckon this negligence, should you act thus in your worldly affairs; and I suppose none would wonder in such case should you fall into poverty, or lay the blame on any thing but your own negligence.

Secondly,

Secondly, You neglect this falvation, if you do not labour to be acquainted with it. Your heart and life are not influenced by the Gospel-salvation, Why? Because you do not know it, and use no pains to know it. You do not search the Scripture yourself, nor confer about it with others, nor attend the public ministry of the word as often as opportunity offers; so you remain in ignorance. And is it to be thought that this will excuse you? You cannot think so yourselves. Have you not means? And do not you slight them? And is not your ignorance owing to that? And what can you call this but neglecting salvation? But another perhaps is saying in his heart, I know this salvation, and am well acquainted with my duty; yet,

Thirdly, you will be found to neglect this salvation, if you do not practise what you know of it. A man may know much, yet do little: which is the sure way to be beaten with many stripes. It is a knowledge that proceeds from the head into the heart and life, which is a saving knowledge. Suppose you know that you are a sinner, yet your heart is not humbled to a suitable sense of your lost condition: or you know who Christ is, and what he has done for sinners, yet do not heartily come to him to be saved; or say, you know what the new creature is, but do not strive to attain unto it, but go forward in a mere self-conceited formality; what doth your knowledge, and what do your attendances prosit? You evidently

neglect this great falvation.,

Fourthly, If you do not value this falvation above all things, you put a flight upon it, and neglect it. You neglect it, if you esteem any thing in the world in comparison with it.—

If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life, he cannot be my disciple. You see there must be no comparison. Christ must be dearer than all; yea, and a man must set such a value upon him as to be ready to part with all things rather than disgrace Christ, or go without his favour. Now it is no uncommon thing I suppose, that a man would have Christ, yet will retain one thing or other which he will not quit for his sake. He would have part in this great salvation, but it must be in his own way, with a re-

ferve against certain self-denying practices, and world-denying duties. What can be plainer than that in such case this salvation is neglected and has a slight put upon it? Many are hasty to say, 'Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest;' but when the mortifying work comes on, then it is, Lord, 'suffer me first to go and bury my father.' Lord, 'let me first go bid them farewel which are at home at my house.\* Such are looking back, and not sit for the kingdom of God; for they manifestly slight and neglect it.

And thus having marked out to you who they are that neglect this falvation, I am at liberty to enforce, as was pro-

posed in the

Third place, The danger of neglecting fo great falvation.—

How shall we escape, if we do?

First, How shall we escape the curse of the Law, if we neglect this falvation? If we flight this falvation, and let it flip through our hands, is there any other way of being faved? People may fancy what they will, and please themselves with delusions propagated by Satan in the world, that all shall be well though they walk in the imaginations of their hearts; may conceit I know not what of God's mercy, and that he will not cause to perish so many of his creatures, as must perish if the gospel be the only way of falvation, and they only shall be faved who follow that way; I fay, people may fuffer their lusts and the devil to cheat them at this rate; but after all, what shall we make of such plain declarations as this of the text to the contrary? 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great falvation?' As much as to fav, 'We shall never be able to escape, there is but this one way under the sun, and if we will not take this, there is absolutely no escaping for us: escape; consider the very word, it supposes us in imminent peril, befet with dangers, and flying for our lives. And that is the very truth of our case; for we have sinned, and cursed is every one that hath done fo. Who will fay he hath not? But Christ was made a curse for us, and if we will fly to him for refuge, escaping for our lives, the curse shall not light upon us; for there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus: but if not, the sentence is gone forth, and he that believeth not is condemned already.

But

But Secondly, The words have yet a more awful fense. How shall we escape? That is, how dreadfully shall we perish! Questions in Scripture do usually import their contraries in the strongest manner. How shall we escape? It is an argument drawn from comparison with the certain punishment of those who transgressed Moses' law; as appears from the foregoing verse. 'If the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recome pence of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great falvation? If they were furely and justly punished for transgreffing the word fpoken by angels, how much more shall we be punished for slighting and disobeying this great falvation, which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness?' We shall perish without plea or excuse in our mouths; we shall perish with a great destruction, because the salvation we had neglected is so great. 'He that despised Moses' law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses. Of how much forer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy?' How shall he die without mercy, and under how manifold witnesses, who has despised and neglected the Gospel, so great a falvation? Be pleased only to step forward in your thoughts to that day, ' when the Lord Iefus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 'It follows, 'They shall be punished with everlasting destruction.'\* For what? For not obeying the gospel: for neglecting fo great falvation. Then the greatness of this falvation shall be fully opened to them, and they shall be found to have added to all their other damning fins, this most damning of all, neglecting and flighting the Gospel. How confounded and ashamed will they then be, when the greatness of this salvation shall appear before them, and they shall be made to see how the glory of God's love moved it, and how it was devised for the salvation of sinners, what amazing means were found out to effect it, and how full and complete a falvation it was? Surely, finners, you shall wonder and perish at the fight; and must acquiesce in the sentence, though the Judge

fay to you, 'Thy blood be upon thine own head. Depart

from me, accurfed.'

Surely then we should bethink ourselves betimes, while it is yet to-day, lest we fall into this condemnation. And I befeech you let us all do it. For why will you die? Is it not better for us to live than to die? Is not God's blessing better for us than his curse, and heaven than hell? We have the means in our hands, salvation, great salvation, so great salvation that one cannot think of it without astonishment. Only let us see if we do not want it. Why the greatness of the salvation shews how very greatly we want it. And if we want it, it is ready for us, it waits upon us. Be sure there be no delay any longer, lest, while we sleep, the night and the bridegroom come; the day of salvation end; and the door of mercy be shut against us: and then how shall we escape if we have neglected so great salvation?

## SERMON LII.

#### ACTS XXVI. 28.

Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

A GRIPPA was almost, alas! but almost, persuaded to be a Christian. What a pity, that being so near the kingdom of heaven, he should not enter into it! that when his foot was now at the door, and a step forward had brought him into Immanuel's land, he should have stopped short! Doubtless some monstrous form presented itself to his mind that moment, and forced him back; somewhat inconceivably formidable stood against him, and confounded his purpose. It must have put on an appearance more terrible than hell; or perhaps it wore an enchanting aspect, and seemed more desirable than heaven. He was almost persuaded; there he stopped. When almost perfuaded, it was but a little way to be perfuaded allogether: yet to that he never attained. And what did his almost perfuafion avail, but to render his condition more inexcufable, his mifery more deplorable? Being but almost persuaded he had no part in Christ; being almost persuaded, he lost Christ with peculiar guilt.

What has been may be. Possibly Agrippa's case may be the case of some of us. We may have been almost persuaded to be Christians, but may have wanted the heart to be really such. The case of hardened sinners, who have no pretence of having done any thing for their souls, is out of the question. But sew, possibly none, will own themselves to be of this graceless character; but will fancy they have something to No. 7.

fay for themselves, and maintain some hope that they may do well in another world. So that when I am speaking to the almost Christian, I shall at the same time necessarily take in those who though they have never done any thing toward becoming Christians, yet will be depending upon false soundations. To treat this subject clearly it will be proper,

First, To consider, when we are entirely persuaded to be

Christians.

Secondly, When we are but almost perfuaded to be fo. I birdly. What hinders those who are almost perfuaded to be Christians from being so altogether. Let us consider then,

First, When we are entirely perfuaded to be Christians .-It is my endeavour always to speak in the most intelligible manner, and to bring what I have to fay into a determinate point that may be easily feen, to the end that you may not be puzzled by a variety of matter and of distinctions. Accordingly here, though there be a thousand things which are descriptive of a real Christian, I shall speak only of one, the leading principle upon which all the rest turns, and that is a renewed will. When a man's will is wrought upon to choose God steadily and universally, then he is perfuaded to be a Christian altogether. And this is the grand matter, and the principal point by which all is determined. Let a man go what lengths he will, if his will be not brought to fix upon God, he stops short and nothing is done. And he that is really brought unto God has his will so fixed. You must take special notice, fixed steadily with an abiding determination; not in a fudden heat, not in hasty wishes, not in sudden resolutions, however fervent they may feem to be for the present, but upon a deliberate choice and free confent; founded upon a discovery of God's excellencies in himself, and his right in us, and proved to be a real choice by the perfeverance of the foul in feeking after God; ferving him, liking him, and endeavouring to be more closely united to him. And then also there is an universal choice, choosing God in every respect as the great good of the foul; choosing him to rule over us, and to make us happy, in a preference to and rejection of all idols; choosing his will as the only rule of our conduct, in opposition to all our inclinations, and his favour as our only support and comfort, instead of all the confidences and comforts of this present world.

Nothing I think can be plainer, than that the person, whose

will

will is thus determined and fixed upon God, is a real Christian, has had a real change wrought upon him, and that God has put into such an one the new heart. I say God has put it into him, for this choice and change is of God's operation.— Concerning which it will be needful to observe, that it is expressly said in Scripture, God worketh in us to will, \* and that we are born again of the Spirit:'+ which turning of the will is effected by a concurrence of the most persuasive arguments, and a divine, fecret, almighty operation. The change is wrought by the power of God, yet he effects it by means of fuch convincing arguments, that our choice is with the utmost freedom and confent. First, he influences the sinner in a way of persuasion, representing to his mind the misery of an apostate state, and proposing himself to him to be his God, in fuch a display of his loveliness, loving-kindness, eternity, power, and all-perfection, that the creature fees there is nothing but vanity and mifery out of God, and all happiness in him. And while God does thus cause his glory to pass before the finner in the most perfuasive manner, he does powerfully enable his will to determine and fettle upon God by a mighty and converting operation. The man is dealt with (you fee) as a reasonable creature, and his choice is wrought upon the most convincing arguments, and with the freest consent. fo that he does not lose the freedom of his will in making choice of God, though it be God that worketh in him thus to fix and determine his choice upon fuch prevailing confiderations.

You see by this time what it is to be persuaded to be a Christian; that it is to be wrought upon by the arguments, and enabled by the grace of the Gospel to choose God, to serve and enjoy him steadily and universally, that is, in an abiding and unlimited determination of the will or beart. Fass we on therefore,

Secondly, To confider when we are but almost persuaded to be Christians. And this is certainly the case, when we stop short of giving up the will and heart to God in the manner now described. Where this is not, there is no true Christian; the soundation is wanting, all is unsound, and whatever be the appearances, Christ has no part in us. In general therefore

<sup>\*</sup> Philip. ii. 13. + John iii. 5.

fore it must be laid down, that a man is but almost persuaded to be a Christian, who is not perfuaded and wrought upon to give himself unto God, in the steady and universal renunciation of all idols. Yet a man may go a great way in religious matters, who never yet attains to a true change of heart and choice of God.

Now here, waving the consideration of all fuch characters as have no tendency towards being Christians indeed, and therefore the cases of the careless finner and the presuming formalist, who have never yet approached to being almost

perfuaded to be Christians, I remark,

First, A man may have been exercised with great terrors of conscience, and dread of God's wrath, who was never perfuaded to be a Christian. This was the case of that primitive reprobate, Cain; under the fense of God's indignation inflicted upon his conscience, he cries out, 'My punishment is greater than I can bear.'\* A man may have a very hell in his conscience, (witness the traitor Judas) who has not a spark of grace there. Such preparatory convictions of conscience, which often lead to a good iffue under the guidance of the Spirit, people do often rest in and stop upon, and are never perfuaded to be Christians, however much or long they have suffered under them.

So, Secondly, A man may go farther, and attain a clear and diffinct knowledge of gospel truths, and that there is no falvation but by the mercy of God through the merits of Jesus Christ, and yet not be perfuaded to be a Christian. Balaam had great knowledge of God. And many will fay at the judgment, ' Have we not prophesied in thy name?' which they could not have done without knowledge; to whom Christ

will answer, 'Depart from me, I know you not.'

Yea, Thirdly, There may be much emotion in the affections, when a man is but almost a Christian. There is that in spiritual things which is very apt to move us, especially when they are new, and more so when they are set forth in a moving manner. All they that faw Christ crucified, smote on their breafts; but you do not hear any of them were converted till after the day of Pentecost. There may be affections of joy, as in those that ' received the word with joy, yet by and by in time of temptation fell away; and in the Jews, who for a feason rejoiced to walk in the light of John's ministry, as was particularly the case of Herod, who heard him gladly, and did many things: and there may be affections of forrow about sin, as in Judas, of whom it is said that he repented himself; and in Ahab, who, we are told, humbled himself, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly; and in king Saul, who was greatly moved at David's repeated kindness in sparing his life, and said, I have sinned, return, my fon David: and yet with all this joy or forrow there may

be no good state.

Fourthly, All this may be accompanied with an outward reformation; a man may for a time longer or shorter, for sake the gross sins he before indulged himself in, and grow very orderly and decent, when yet he falls short of true Christianity. An awakened conscience will do much this way, and prudence may lend a hand to it: under the one and other an outward change may be wrought, when the heart remains in the old unconverted state. We read in St. Peter of such as 'having' escaped the pollutions that were in the world, through lust' were again intangled therein, and overcome: '\* and the whole family of Pharisees testify, 'that the outside may be made clean 'when the heart is full of rottenness.'

And Fifthly, A man may be so convinced that without holiness no man shall see the Lord, and that there is somewhat so excellent in the ways of godliness beyond those of sin, as to be seriously wishing oftentimes that he were holy and godly, and to be taking up resolutions many times of renouncing the world. When the glories of Christianity are set before a man, he can hardly help wishing he were a Christian, and determining he will be no longer a flave to sin: but then, though there seem to be something of the will in this, yet there is no wholeness of heart in it, and it is but a sudden blaze that in an instant goes out. When such an one comes to question himself closely, and propose to himself a choice of God, and walking with him in his ways, in a rejection of all sin, then the hypocrify appears, he cannot consent to it, and the unsoundness of the double heart is made manifest.

So you fee a man may go a great way, and yet fall short of being

being a Christian. And that he always doth, when his will is not, through divine grace, upon the persuasive arguments of the Gospel, steadily and universally determined to serve God .-However awakened his conscience, and clear his light and knowledge; whatever touches of joy or forrow he may have felt in his affections about spiritual things; however reformed. regular, and civil his outward conduct; and whatfoever feemingly good defires he may have, and firm refolutions he may make; yet being deficient in the main thing, namely, a will and heart determined and fixed upon God, he is as yet but almost perfuaded to be a Christian. That Agrippa had gone the most of this length seems evident from the history before us; he had conscience it appears from these very words; for his knowledge St. Paul appeals to him; he was certainly much affeeted with what the Apostle had been representing; he wished he were a Christian; he said, Thou hast almost persuaded me to be one; but there it stopt. The Gospel argument pleaded strongly, and there was an evident motion upon the heart, but he repressed the one and the other, and remained an almost Christian.

And has not this been the case of others as well as Agrippa? Say, my friends, have none of you under the ministry of the word found your conscience greatly alarmed, the light of the Gospel breaking in upon you, your affections warm, your wishes earnest, your resolutions running high, in a word almost persuaded to be Christians; and yet but almost persuaded, alas, to this day not prevailed upon to forsake all and follow Christ? What a pity you say, that one so near the kingdom of God as Agrippa should stop short? What a pity, say I, this should be your case? and yet it is; many of you know it is.—Ah, that it were otherwise! would to God that all that hear me this day were both almost and altogether such as was the Apostle!

But I birdly, You will fay, what made Agrippa stop, when he was so very near being a Christian? Alas, sirs! the very same things that have hindered you, the love of the world, and of the things of it. Conscience pleaded hard for his owning Christ; but he was a great man, his interest, honour, ease and reputation, pleaded harder. He saw before his eyes what his owning Christ must bring him to; he knew the Apostle's only crime was heartly embracing Christianity, and should he

with

run himself into a like wretched condition with this criminal by embracing it? He had no heart to this, he will be no Christian on these terms; conscience must yield, for he will not lose his honour, character and worldly ease. So he smooths over the matter, pays St Paul a compliment, agrees that he had done nothing worthy of death or even of bonds, yet to fave himself from the suspicion of being a favourer of Christianity does not drop a word of his being fet at liberty (though that was entirely in the governor's power, and but justice to an innocent man) and to keep fair with the Jews, refers him to the judgement of Cæsar. Here you see his beart, he was a time-ferver, a man of the world, who at bottom had not the least heart towards God, but would make conscience truckle to convenience. Could he be more than almost perfuaded to be a Christian, while he was under this worldly bias? Had he given way to the convictions of his own mind and the fecret workings of divine grace; instead of quenching had he closed in with them, and at once made an honest profession of the truth of Christianity as he then faw it without hearkening to worldly confiderations, he had been a Christian indeed.— Here you fee then what stops many, who are brought under concern for their fouls, and under the hearing of the Gospel are fecretly moved to close in with it, from receiving it: they will not, they cannot endure to think of parting with their worldly reputation, interest or ease; they will not buy Christ fo dear, they difmifs conscience for the time with a promise that when they have a more convenient feafon they will call for it again.

Let this therefore be noted as a most certain yet tremendous truth, that all, who in the manner described have been almost persuaded to be Christians, and never wrought upon to be really so, have been hindered by the love of sin, by some worldly lust which they would not part with, or some carnal indulgence which they were determined to gratify. 'Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life," tays our Lord to the Pharises. Why would they not? What, because they wanted means of conviction that he was the Christ? No, but because they would not; for if they did, they must give up their worldly honour, interest, ease and reputation. It is the same case

with many of you, my dear friends, you will not come to Christ; it is not through want of conviction that there is falvation in none other, but because if you do, you shall be laughed at, reproached, have your names cast out, perhaps fuffer a little in your interests, or be forced to deny yourselves a course of life you have been long accustomed to. For these reasons you have many a time hitherto resisted the gospel offer, when it has been brought home to your ears and your confciences; and for the fame miserable reasons I fear you will still persist in the same unhappy conduct. You see you cannot be Christians indeed unless you give up your hearts to God upon his Gospel invitation and secret motion. This you have not yet done. Will you do it now? Or will you not come to Christ for life? With your eyes open will you desperately stand out still, and prefer the world, a mere nothing, to the living God? How inexcusable must you then be in your own conscience! or how will you answer it to your souls in another world? I would gladly prevail with you to go one step farther than Agrippa; and in that view to lay it seriously to heart, whether there be any thing but despair out of Christ, and whether there be not infinitely more than we can defire in him. Confult your Bibles, fee if any man ever went to heaven, but in the way of renouncing the devil, the world and the flesh; and if not, make this day one vigorous effort for liberty and glory.

The only farther use I would make of this subject is, that, since the very life of Christianity consists in giving up the heart to God in a steady and universal choice of him and his ways, and seeing also there are so many ways wherein we may stop short of this self-denying determination, let me express my wish that we may all carefully examine ourselves whether we are brought sincerely to it. If we are not, that we may diligently seek it; and if we are, that we may diligently improve it; and that all of us may go beyond this Agrippa, and be not only

almost, but altogether Christians.

FINIS.











